JONATHAN RAUCH: HYPERPLURALISM HELL

JUNE 6, 1994 · $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Re-Re-Thinking The Sexes

{Have Gender Studies Run Aground?}

N WOLFE

#BXBKDML ******* 3-DIGIT 757
#757558AB11RY007# 328
HO NMNE S00312
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
ROY HAMMER LIB
PO BOX 111
SANDY TX 75755-0111

0 787445 1 49140

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Consider This A Performance Bonus.

Lease The Lincoln Mark VIII, America's Best-Selling Luxury Coupe:

STANDARD FEATURES

- 4.6-liter 32-valve Four-Cam V-8 engine
- Sequential multi-port electronic fuel injection
- Dual air bags**
- Four-wheel disc anti-lock brakes
- Anti-theft alarm
- Dual Autoglide front seats
- Six-way power driver and passenger seats with power recliner and lumbar support
- Electronic four-speed automatic overdrive transmission
- CFC-free electronic automatic climate control

$429 PER MONTH, 24-MONTH LEASE†

Refundable security deposit	$450
Down payment	$2,925
First month's payment	$429
Cash due at lease inception	$3,804††

For more information, call 1 800 255-5433.

LINCOLN
What A Luxury Car Should Be

Red Carpet Lease. Vehicle Leasing Plans

*Based on total sales MYTD through 3/30/94. **Driver and right-front passenger Supplemental Restraint System. Always wear your safety belt. †Lease payment based on average capitalized cost of 90.63% MSRP for Mark VIII for 24-month closed-end Ford Credit Red Carpet Leases purchased in the U.S. through 3/31/94. Some payments higher, some lower. See dealer for payment and terms. Payments may be higher in AK, CT, KY, MA, MO, NC, RI, TX & WV. For special lease terms, take new retail delivery from dealer stock by 6/30/94. Lessee may have option to buy vehicle at lease end at a price negotiated with the dealer at signing. Lessee is responsible for excess wear/tear and $.11 per mile over 30,000 miles. Credit approval/insurability determined by Ford Credit. Total of monthly payments is $10,296. ††Excludes tax, title and other fees. Optional wheels shown not included in price.

LINCOLN-MERCURY DIVISION Ford Buckle up—together we can save lives.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

JUNE 6, 1994

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,142

REC'D MAY 26 1994

Property of
Ambassador College Library
Big Sandy, TX 75755

Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 27.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Ed Koch drones, Bret Schundler moans, the metaphor clinic &c.

6 **MICHAEL KINSLEY** TRB: PLURALISM GONE SOUR Congressman Chris and Mr. Rauch.

7 **THE EDITORS** KOREA COUNSELING The Kim Il Sung problem.

8 **NOTEBOOK** Not quite killing John Wayne Gacy, smearing Sam Brown &c.

9 **DOUGLAS COUPLAND** LEGOLAND POSTCARD: TOYS THAT BIND A generation remembers.

10 **FRED BARNES** WHITE HOUSE WATCH: THE TILT Clinton's growing Congress problem.

11 **JEFFREY ROSEN** COURT WATCH: EVEN STEPHEN Breyer and the post-ideological Court.

12 **BOB KERREY** FOR LEW The eulogy the senator never gave for his friend, Lewis Puller.

14 **ROGER ROSENBLATT** RWANDA THERAPY Telling and retelling the horrors of war.

18 **JAMES MANN** SHAH DENG? The most useful model for understanding China today isn't Taiwan or South Korea. It's Iran of the late 1970s.

19 **LARRY ENGELMANN AND ROY ROWAN** BOOM BOOMING China's profitable arms trade.

22 **JONATHAN RAUCH** THE HYPERPLURALISM TRAP Forget what you've heard about the people vs. the "special interests." Today, thanks to populism, the people *are* the special interests. And they're proliferating out of control.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: JOKERS WILD Pedro Almodóvar's excess.

27 **ALAN WOLFE** THE GENDER QUESTION Relations between men and women have never been so scrutinized and theorized about. An assessment of the current feminist conclusions and nonconclusions.

34 **DAVID BROMWICH** THE BELL JAR *The Silent Woman: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes* by Janet Malcolm

38 **WALTER LAQUEUR** RED HERRINGS *Special Tasks: The Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness—A Soviet Spymaster* by Pavel Sudoplatov with Anatoly Sudoplatov, et al.

40 **RICHARD TILLINGHAST** POEM *Hooded Crow and Speedwell*

42 **ANN HULBERT** WASHINGTON DIARIST: ANIMAL DREAMS

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
ANDREW SULLIVAN

Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER

Executive Editor
DAVID SHIPLEY

Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, WESTON KOSOVA, CHARLES LANE, MICHAEL LEWIS, ROBERT WRIGHT

Deputy Editor
EVAN SMITH

Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Poetry
MARY JO SALTER

Dance
MINDY ALOFF

Legal Affairs
JEFFREY ROSEN

Contributing Editors
ELIOT A. COHEN, STANLEY CROUCH, ANNA HUSARSKA, JOHN B. JUDIS, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ROGER ROSENBLATT, MAGGIE SCARF, ROBERT SHAPIRO, RONALD STEEL, E.V. THAW, TOM TOLES, TATYANA TOLSTAYA, MICHAEL WALZER, JACOB WEISBERG, C. VANN WOODWARD

Associate Editors
RUTH SHALIT, ALEXANDER STAR

Assistant Editor
AMY KNOX SHEFFER

Design Consultant
ERIC BAKER

Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY

Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY

Production Director
BRUCE STEINKE

Production Manager
ANGELINA HAN

Copy Editor
SUZAN REVAH

Literary Assistant
CAREY LIFSCHULTZ

Reporter-Researchers
CHRIS PRAWDZIK, DANTE RAMOS, HANNA ROSIN, JOSHUA SHENK, GILLIAN LEE WEISS

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH

Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON

Associate Publisher-Marketing
PAUL J. VIZZA

Associate Publisher-Circulation
PEGGY JARVIS FERRIN

Associate Publisher-Advertising
JAMES J. McCABE

Controller
JEAN GANDY

Advertising Director
JENNIFER BARRETT

Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. BONIFER

Circulation Manager
CECELIA M. STEPHENS

Advertising Assistant
DIANE M. SEBOLD

Accounting Assistant
JACQUELYN M. PASCALE

New York Coordinator
SUZANNE McENTEE

Circulation Assistant
DEBORAH B. WEST

Back Issues and Reception
CAROLYN PARHAM

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 210, Number 23, Issue 4,142, June 6, 1994. (Printed in the U.S. on May 18, 1994.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 10 & 17, July 18 & 25, Aug. 22 & 29, and Sept. 19 & 26, 1994) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic Advertising Sales Office (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1994 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: editors@tnr.com Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Koch-22

To the editors:

In "Notes on Kemp" (May 9) Fred Barnes comments on my participation at the *National Review* dinner on March 5, which he did not attend. He criticizes my behavior, and while that is his right, his facts are wrong. What is particularly disturbing is that he or his office called my office to secure a copy of my speech but did not ask to speak to me to check the facts. Had he done what is elementary in this field—I have some basis for making that statement as a columnist and radio and television commentator—he would have asked me whether the report he had was accurate.

Barnes says that "Kemp was the featured speaker" at the dinner. That is not true. I was the keynote speaker and featured as such on the program. There were several other speakers, including Jack Kemp, and an additional speaker, a candidate for public office, was added to the program, delaying both my speech and Kemp's speech, which were to follow. Barnes says, "The former New York mayor was supposed to talk fifteen minutes as the warm-up." Not true. I was allocated forty-five minutes to speak and used that amount. He says, "But he droned on for nearly an hour." Again, not true. I spoke within the forty-five minutes allotted to me. Is it fair to say I "droned on," when at the end of my speech, which was interrupted with applause several times, there was a standing ovation?

I suspect that we did not see a normal report on a meeting that was not attended by the columnist writing the column. What we saw was a personal statement and diatribe. I watch Fred Barnes on "The McLaughlin Group," and I am always amazed that he treats Eleanor Clift, who is a caricature of the radical left, so rudely and disdainfully. It is as though he were a little boy plucking the wings off butterflies. I suggest that when he takes me on without having been present and violates basic rules that columnists adhere to, he is both out of his depth and demonstrating his bias.

EDWARD I. KOCH
New York, New York

How untrue!

To the editors:

I guess the title of Ruth Shalit's story about me ("Schundler's Lust," May 9) was more than you could resist. But it is unfortunate that Shalit, who was only in Jersey City for a few hours, substituted vacuous sarcasm for research. Anyone reading the story will come away believing that the policies of empowerment have done little for the people of Jersey City. How untrue!

As a result of our community-based policing initiatives, crime in Jersey City has fallen. Our streets are cleaner because of a program we have initiated using prison inmates to pick up litter; they will be cleaner still after a much more significant new program is rolled out this summer. There are 8,000 new jobs in this city of 230,000, thanks to our efforts to make the city more attractive to business and industry. And an innovative jobs placement program that we are developing will ensure that Jersey City's unemployed residents get these new jobs.

Last year Jersey City received national recognition for our first-in-history securitization of city tax liens that turned our greatest liabilities into assets. As a result, not only are tax collections up, but we are cutting local property taxes for the second straight year in my one and a half years as mayor.

And, contrary to what you have led your readers to believe, spending is actually down in Jersey City, despite our being forced this year by the state to begin paying out three years' worth of pay increases accrued from the period before I took office. Why you chose to inform your readers that our payroll is up $1 million without informing them that it is due to this mandated pay-out I will never know.

Instead of reporting the merits of what is going on in Jersey City, Shalit chose instead to misstate facts and to mischaracterize comments. For instance, when asked about the most enjoyable aspect of receiving speaking invitations, I stated that it was getting to know people like Jack Kemp, Bill Bennett and Bill Kristol, who are intellectual heroes of mine. But this humble sentiment was contorted by your reporter to sound self-inflating and narcissistic. Shalit goes on to make my passionate belief in empowerment sound like political expedience. Later, when I take off my tie in a room full of staffers, your reporter makes it seem like I was planning to undress. How absurd!

I love being the mayor of Jersey City, and I am proud of what the people of this city are accomplishing. But working seven days a week, without any days off, is not part of my job description, and the fact that I will periodically travel out of state for a weekend speaking engagement is hardly of front-page significance.

BRET SCHUNDLER
Mayor
Jersey City, New Jersey

To the editors:

As a fervent fan of TNR, I was disappointed not to recognize a trace of my college roommate, Bret Schundler, in Ruth Shalit's dismissive profile. Apart from being charming, articulate and intelligent, Schundler is genuinely newsworthy because he is addressing the issues associated with urban poverty in a radical way. This may not appeal to sclerotic big-city special-interest machines. But Democrats ignore Schundler's moral and intellectual challenge at their political peril.

LAURENCE GRAFSTEIN
New York, New York

Ruth Shalit replies:

Mayor Schundler's substantive points—cleaner streets and the like—were discussed in my article. On the question of payroll: the mayor campaigned against the increases he now defends as mandatory; furthermore, he gave his top aides bonuses that were not mandated by the city's pay-out.

Irish ayes

To the editors:

In his essay "Patriot Games," Conor Cruise O'Brien accuses Jim Sheridan, director of *In the Name of the Father*, and presumably myself as scriptwriter, of failing to produce an acceptable picture of life in Northern Ireland today. Our film is not acceptable to O'Brien because, he claims, there are no Ulster Protestants portrayed in the film. This is wrong. The Ulster actor Gerry McSorley plays the Protestant Ulster policeman, Detective McPeake. This character represented the only Ulster Protestants referred to in Gerry Conlon's book, namely the RUC policemen who interrogated Conlon after his arrest, one of whom broke Conlon's nose during interrogation at the Springfield Road police station, Belfast. Sheridan and I set out to tell Gerry Conlon's story, not to produce a socio-historical report on Northern Ireland. To raise the absence of Ulster Protestants in our film is disingenuous.

O'Brien's second accusation that we created the McAndrew character to receive some imprimatur from the IRA is frankly nuts. O'Brien claims that this character, a captured IRA man who admits he bombed the Guildford pub—is pure fiction. Again he's wrong. McAndrew was a composite character based on the Balcombe St. gang, a four-man IRA unit captured after a two-year bombing blitz in London. The leader of that gang, Joe O'Connell, confessed to, and gave very specific details about, the Guildford bombing. He did this in 1976, a year and a half after Conlon's arrest

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and thirteen and a half years before his release. This is not fiction. It is part of the record.

TERRY GEORGE
Co-Screenwriter, Co-Executive Producer
In the Name of the Father
New York, New York

To the editors:

Conor Cruise O'Brien is disturbed that Jim Sheridan didn't acknowledge the presence of Northern Ireland's Protestant community in his film *In the Name of the Father.* Perhaps that is fortunate for the cause O'Brien espouses, which is the continued link between London and Belfast. For the Loyalist paramilitaries in Northern Ireland currently are slaughtering Catholics—particularly Catholics in onetime staunchly Protestant neighborhoods that are slouching toward Rome—at a rate that would do any mad terrorist proud.

Most recently, the Ulster Volunteer Force added to its strangely ignored terror campaign the murder of a 34-year-old mother of two who had the bad luck to be sitting in her parlor when gunmen came looking for her husband, a member of Sinn Fein. Some days before, UVF butchers killed a woman named Margaret Wright, an epileptic, by clubbing her to death with billiard sticks. The Protestant terrorists thought Wright was a Catholic. She wasn't.

Perhaps when the British government reacts to such crimes by rounding up random Protestants, brutalizing confessions out of them and tossing them in prison for fifteen years, Sheridan will chronicle their case, too.

TERRY GOLWAY
New York, New York

Conor Cruise O'Brien replies:

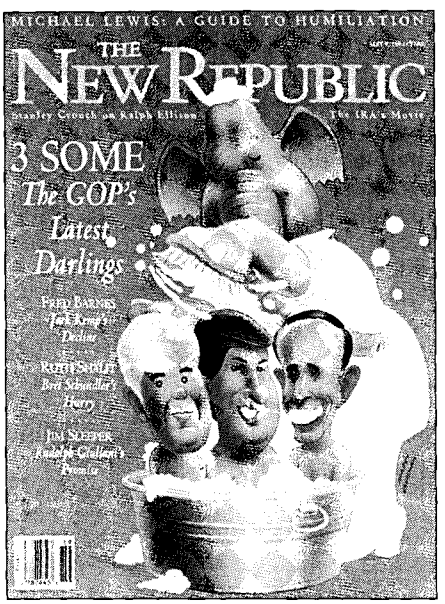
Terry George's point that there was one Ulster Protestant character does not invalidate my central thesis, which is that the film gives its audiences a distorted picture of Northern Ireland. Protestants, who make up about 60 percent of the population of Northern Ireland, are hardly adequately represented by a solitary policeman in a minor role among scores of interesting Catholics.

Terry George claims that the IRA character, Joe McAndrew, is not fictional, just "composite": a nice distinction. Neither McAndrew nor the originals out of whom he is said to be composed play any part in Gerry Conlon's story—the story which, as George says, Sheridan and he "set out" to tell. Nor did Joe O'Connell's alleged confession play any part in that story. The "composite" McAndrew's confession is a notional element that has the effect of making the film more useful to the IRA than the book is, thus widening its appeal to the numerous pro-IRA people making up a large potential audience, in various American cities. George thinks I am "frankly nuts" to suggest that this effect is likely to have been intended. But one does not need to be mentally deranged in order to hold that rational people, like the clever individuals who made this acclaimed film, generally intend the probable consequences of their actions, where these are to their advantage.

California dreamin'

To the editors:

Douglas Coupland's dulcet paean to Palo Alto ("Peace," May 9) made this reverse-transplant—a twelve-year resi-



dent of that sylvan city, now trudging its more urban East coast counterpart, Cambridge—dreamily homesick. Unfortunately, my reverie was interrupted by recalling a feature of Palo Alto that is typically ignored, even by longtime residents: East Palo Alto.

East Palo Alto mirrors its wealthy neighbor, across the racial divide of the Bayshore Freeway, as a kind of reverse image. While the Palo Alto City Council has wrestled with whether or not gas-powered leaf blowers constitute a noisy assault on the tranquillity of suburban streets, East Palo Alto residents suffer routine blasts of gunfire. East Palo Alto has the highest per capita murder rate in the United States. Palo Alto schools are among the best in the country, dazzling in their affluence. East Palo Alto schools are crumbling, pest-ridden, paint-peeling dumps. And East Palo Alto's police forces are so inadequate they have to rely on pro bono help from county sheriffs' deputies and even volunteer, off-duty cops from nearby communities.

Coupland's postcard from Palo Alto was titled "Peace," no doubt an unwitting irony, or maybe, uncharitably, an expression of uncritical complacency, given the tragic struggle going on in East Palo Alto, a short walk away and visible from the Hoover Tower. Perhaps that story is more instructive for our times than the facade of peace in Palo Alto.

GARY CHAPMAN
Somerville, Massachusetts

Sour

To the editors:

Ian Buruma trivializes James Fallows's ideas about a distinct Asian political economy ("Trading Places," April 18) to create a level playing field for his own contrary and simplistic views about Anglo-Americanism.

Fallows's new book, *Facing the Sun,* argues that for historical, cultural and geopolitical reasons, East Asia's developing countries have cooked up a fast-growth recipe peppered with more government economic and political intervention than the Western stew. Fallows is no Asiaphile but tries to digest some lessons from this for practical American policy formulation.

Buruma is averse to any learning, preferring to preach mythologized American democracy and free markets for worldwide consumption: "The way to deal with Japan, and with other countries in East Asia, is to encourage open, liberal politics and free-market economies." He grasps that if East Asia is really different, his own mechanical liberalism won't work there, which is a self-serving reason for a sour review of Fallows's book.

ALICE H. AMSDEN
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Saddle sore

To the editors:

Let's try really hard not to *ever* again have as unfortunate a beginning sentence to *any* article as "When Ralph Ellison saddled up the pony of death and took that long, lonesome ride into eternity . . . " found in THE NEW REPUBLIC ("The Oklahoma Kid" by Stanley Crouch, May 9).

Crouch should be "horsewhipped" for such useless "Western gibberish" language, "driven off" THE NEW REPUBLIC's ranch and forever "branded" as "a gal darned varmint" unworthy to write (even obituaries) for the magazine.

Thank you. I feel better now.

TREY SENN
Klamath Falls, Oregon

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

Pluralism gone sour

Who is Congressman Chris Smith? According to the official biography released by his office, "Congressman Chris Smith, Fourth District, New Jersey, was re-elected to serve a seventh term in Congress on November 3, 1992, with 63 percent of the final vote. Congressman Smith has been an active legislator, sponsoring bills with a particular emphasis on children, veterans, senior citizens, oppressed peoples, handicapped persons, small business, taxpayers and students. He believes that adherence to moral principles transcends both party loyalty and political pragmatism."

A classic, I think.

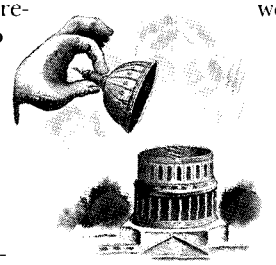
Has any single constituent escaped the "particular emphasis" of Congressman Smith's legislative zeal? Any nontaxpaying, non-oppressed, nonhandicapped, non-veteran, nonstudent citizens of middle age (neither children nor seniors) out there in New Jersey's fourth district? Are we all covered? Good. Fortunately for the fourth district, Congressman Smith's preference for "moral principles" over "political pragmatism" doesn't stop him from celebrating, in the same press release, the "millions of much needed dollars" he secured for a local hospital, "a $35.5 million housing rehabilitation program, a $10 million reconstruction program, a $5.6 million grant for a new senior citizens housing project and several hundred thousand dollars for homeless shelter programs."

Congressman Smith is, of course, a Republican.

What Congressman Smith calls "political pragmatism" Jonathan Rauch calls *Demosclerosis* in his new book of that name (Times Books). Rauch puts forward a theory that blames neither the politicians nor the citizens for our present political discontents, but rather a degenerative tendency built into democracy itself. (A taste of Rauch's views begins on page 22 of this issue of TNR.)

Rauch's interesting and well-written book is largely a gloss on the ideas of Mancur Olson, a political scientist at the University of Maryland. Olson gets discovered every few years, then forgotten, then discovered again. At this point he must feel like the African native in the old *New Yorker* cartoon, watching the great white explorer pose before a waterfall. "It *is* a nice waterfall, isn't it?" he says. "I've always hoped that someone would discover it."

Olson's thinking derives from the classic game theory concept of the "prisoner's dilemma" or "tragedy of the commons." If every farmer in the village grazes his animals without restraint on the village's shared land, the commons will be depleted and all the villagers will be worse off than if they had shown some restraint. But there is no incentive for any individual to show restraint.



The general point is that there are many situations in human life where everyone acting in his or her own self-interest leaves everyone worse off. The specific political point concerns "special interests," or what used to be known grandly as "pluralism." In the early postwar era, pluralism was held to be a great strength of the American political system. The premise was that the sum of all the group interests in a pluralistic system was the general interest. But all the separate "special interests" don't add up to the general interest.

This is not because "special interests" are something apart from the normal citizenry. In fact, we are all part of one or more "special interest." There is no guarantee that everyone's special interest will be weighed equally, but that is not the real problem. The real problem is the tragedy of the commons: each of us pursuing our own special interest can harm the general interest, not serve it. "Children, veterans, senior citizens, oppressed peoples, handicapped persons, small business, taxpayers and students" all get their goodies, and the result is a national debt that harms all more than the goodies benefit them.

Olson's innovative twist on this is that the special interest problem gets worse the longer societies enjoy peace and prosperity. German society was destroyed by fascism and a losing war, and the web of interest groups with political power was destroyed along with it. British society survived World War II largely intact. As a result, during the postwar period, Germany was able to thrive while Britain sank in a swamp of rival claims by interest groups that had retained their power. Or that's the theory. Olson's *The Rise and Decline of Nations* was published in 1982. It must be conceded that Germany's current troubles fit pretty well into his thesis. Fifty years on, Rauch's "demosclerosis" has set in.

If the analysis is right, is there anything short of a cleansing apocalypse, like losing a major war, that can solve the problem? Most of Rauch's proposals, though sound ("eliminate subsidies and programs," reduce trade barriers, etc.) have, as he admits, a certain circularity. It's like telling a fat person that the solution to his problem is to eat less. If the patient could do that, he wouldn't be fat. Rauch's pleas for "leadership," though admirable, are wearisome. They evoke despair more than hope.

His most hopeful suggestion, actually, is that maybe "demosclerosis" isn't really such a terrible problem after all, and therefore it doesn't matter much if it can't be solved. It's a courageous possibility to raise at the end of a book dedicated to generating alarm. (Better at the end than at the beginning, of course.) But it's cold comfort.

My own suspicion is that systemic explanations like Olson's and Rauch's let the citizenry off too easy. So does the fashion for blaming the politicians. What Rauch calls demosclerosis is the political manifestation of the *Culture of Complaint* that Robert Hughes wrote about a couple of years ago in his book of that title. Other social critics have pointed to the litigation explosion, which turns every slight into an occasion for a lawsuit, and the so-called recovery movement—12-step programs and so on—which turns every bump in life's road into an occasion for dramatized self-pity. They see these as evidence of an erosion of the American character. Our political dilemma can be seen that way, too.

Many political conservatives love to wax indignant about "victimology." And generally they agree with the complaints about lawsuits and 12-step programs. But they prefer to blame the disease's political manifestations on "Washington"—thus conveniently letting the voters off the hook.

It's delightful that Congressman Chris believes moral principles transcend political pragmatism. Luckily for him, his constituents don't believe him.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

JUNE 6, 1994

KOREA COUNSELING

North Korea cannot be allowed to develop a nuclear bomb. We have to be very firm about it.
—President Bill Clinton, November 7, 1993

That was President Clinton's line in the Korean sand, and Kim Il Sung has crossed it. American intelligence believes he has extracted enough plutonium from his reactor at Yongbyon to make at least one nuke, and possibly two. Now the American position is, in essence: "North Korea cannot be allowed to develop more nuclear bombs." Yet Kim's diplomats still jerk Clinton's around in negotiations over North Korean noncompliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to which North Korea is an unconditional signatory. No State Department-devised inducement—economic aid and diplomatic recognition; cancellation of U.S.-South Korean military exercises—could coax North Korea into obeying the law and permitting inspection of its bomb-making complexes by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

This exercise in appeasement is getting humiliating. It is also getting dangerous. Defying the threat of United Nations economic sanctions, the North Koreans have just begun removing spent fuel rods from their reactor—with no IAEA inspectors present to account for the five bombs' worth of plutonium those rods contain. Next year, when a new, bigger reactor starts operation, the North could be in a position to mass-produce nukes. North Korea also has a ballistic missile capable of reaching Japan. The threat is not only that Kim will use these weapons to blackmail or attack his neighbors, but also that he will peddle atomic weapons to other outlaw states for hard currency. The prospect of those future megaprofits may be why the Great Leader is not swayed by American offers of cash.

Yes, we do have to be very firm. The problem is that Clinton, as the North Koreans realize, is playing a weak hand—and it's not entirely his fault. The geopolitics of Northeast Asia are complex and treacherous. China, irked at the United States over human rights, might veto sanctions against the Communist neighbor it rescued from the United States back in 1950. Japan and South Korea, too, are ambivalent about sanctions, uncertain of American resolve and wary of risking a war that could be fought on their respective territories. The North says sanctions would be considered an act of war. This is probably a bluff, but given the ill-prepared state of American and South Korean troops (a Reagan-Bush legacy), the United States is not yet in a position to call it. There is little chance that a quick pre-emptive air strike could cripple all of North Korea's bunkered-in nuclear facilities, much less its conventional weaponry.

The lesson of North Korea is the same as the lesson of Iraq: the existing multilateral nonproliferation regime is simply too full of loopholes to prevent a determined international outlaw from building a nuclear weapon. While South Korea was turning itself into a modern, democratizing economic powerhouse, Kim Il Sung was turning his country (with a GNP one-thirtieth that of the South) into a fortress, and spending every last precious dollar on his nuke. Does anyone seriously believe such a man will stop now just because of a piece of parchment he signed fifteen years ago, or because someone threatens sanctions that would only further impoverish a people he plainly cares nothing about?

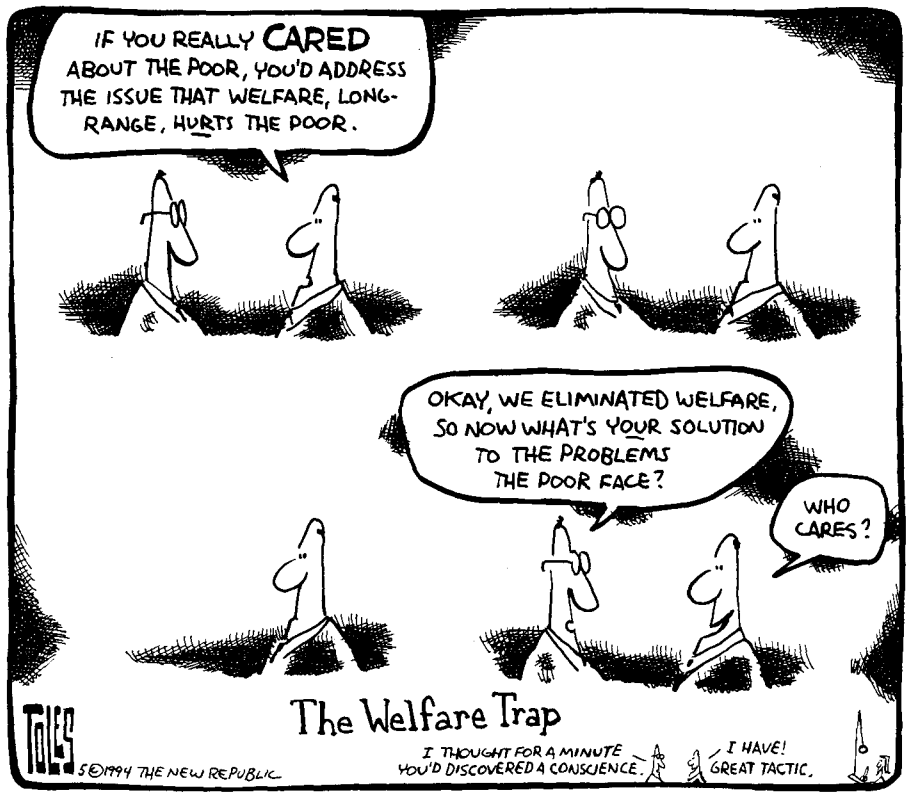
The only real lever against such a dictator is fear. So only deterrence, premised on a credible threat of retaliatory force, is capable of checking the nuclear-armed North Korean threat—a threat it is now too late to eliminate. America has no choice but to strengthen its hand, and that of its allies, in Northeast Asia, even at the risk of provoking the paranoid Kim. This is a military challenge, for us and for our South Korean allies. It is also a diplomatic one. We need to push Japan to cut off the flow of Korean expatriate dollars that feeds Kim's weapons programs. And we also need to reach some sort of understanding on the issue with China.

The situation also calls for political leadership at home, to explain the stakes in Korea and prepare the American public for the chance that we might have to use force there. Secretary of Defense William Perry has undertaken this task, speaking out publicly about the danger, and spurring Pentagon planners to develop a strategy to win a second Korean war. But his message has been muddled by fuzzy diplospeak emanating from the State Department, and sometimes from Clinton, too. If North Korea doesn't permit inspections, the president observed recently, it "runs a risk" of sanctions or "more difficult things." It will take clearer, more decisive thinking than that to make the American deterrent on the Korean peninsula fully credible. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

THE LONG GOODBYE: If John Wayne Gacy thought his own death would be less gruesome than the ones he prepared for thirty-three young male victims, he was wrong. At 12:01 a.m. last Tuesday two of the chemicals meant to usher Gacy into darkness gelled, causing the mixture to stick in its delivery tube. Attendants spent eighteen minutes trying to put Gacy out of his misery. And lethal injection, now an option in twenty-seven states, is supposed to be the most humane way of sending someone to his death. This is not the first time states have botched their executions (see "Live, Death" by Jacob Weisberg, TNR, July 1, 1991). Since 1976 seventeen other executions have gone awry, according to Michael Radelet, a professor of sociology at the University of Florida. In 1985 technicians spent forty-one minutes probing former heroin addict Stephen Peter Morin's veins before they were able to kill him. Jesse Joseph Tafero, strapped in the electric chair, slowly cooked to death in 1990 as the brine-soaked synthetic sponge in his headpiece reduced the electrical current and sent six-inch flames shooting from his head. Jimmy Lee Gray did not go gently when exposed to poison pellets in Mississippi. According to TNR's report of the 1983 execution, Gray "died banging his head against a steel pole in the gas chamber while the reporters counted his moans (eleven, according to the Associated Press)." The family of John F. Thanos, put to death by lethal injection in Maryland last week, tried to appeal his sentence on the grounds of cruel and unusual punishment. Though his execution reportedly went smoothly, they had a point. Capital punishment done swiftly and cleanly is hideous enough. Drawing out an execution with incompetence is tantamount to torture, something the Eighth Amendment explicitly condemns.


IF YOU REALLY CARED ABOUT THE POOR, YOU'D ADDRESS THE ISSUE THAT WELFARE, LONG-RANGE, HURTS THE POOR.
OKAY, WE ELIMINATED WELFARE, SO NOW WHAT'S YOUR SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS THE POOR FACE?
WHO CARES?
TOLES
©1994 THE NEW REPUBLIC
The Welfare Trap
I THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE YOU'D DISCOVERED A CONSCIENCE.
I HAVE! GREAT TACTIC.

ABORT, RETRY, IGNORE: On May 16 a patent deal cleared the way—at last!—for potential U.S. marketing of RU 486, the abortion-inducing pill now used in France. That same day the California Supreme Court held that a person can be prosecuted and convicted for murder if he or she causes—even unknowingly or inadvertently—the death of an eight-week-old fetus. This means that a robber in California could be sentenced to death if he hurts a pregnant woman and causes her to miscarry, whether or not he knew she was pregnant. The case, reported *The Los Angeles Times*, "will not directly affect abortion rights." Huh? If unknowingly killing a first-trimester fetus is murder, how can killing that same fetus deliberately be anything less? Abortion policy, already vexed, now sinks to a new level of moral incoherence.

GOP SMEAR WATCH: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is not one of those ambassadorial postings, like Paris, say, to which the president can easily appoint a favored party hack. The last two CSCE ambassadors, Max Kampelman and Warren Zimmerman, have just given their support to President Clinton's nominee, Sam Brown Jr., a businesslike public servant and public-spirited businessman whose approval in the Senate has been held up (and may be endangered) by a coalition of yahoos, like Senator Jesse Helms, and partisans, like Senator Hank Brown. Sam Brown's opponents are not simply questioning his competence; they're also questioning his patriotism, and so is *The Wall Street Journal*. This is nuts. Brown reformed the operations of ACTION, including the Peace Corps, into far more effective bodies. His enemies are dredging up words he may or may not have said about Vietnam years ago, which are beside the point. Brown supported the Gulf war, the most salient of post-cold war litmus tests. He has long known that the career of freedom in the world depends on U.S. power. If the half-dozen so-called moderate Republicans join their hysterical colleagues in voting against him, it is their patriotism that is at issue—not his.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MISSING LINK: Fifteen days late ... and not really honest yet. This past Sunday *The New York Times*'s "Week in Review" ran an aptly timed article by one of the paper's now-retired Middle East reporters, Ihsan A. Hijazi. "CAN THE PLO GOVERN?" the headline asks, and then answers, "IN LEBANON, IT TRIED." Hijazi points out that from 1976 to 1982 the PLO ruled fully 40 percent of Lebanon and a far higher proportion of the Muslim-populated turf in the country. But during that period virtually no foreign correspondents in Lebanon monitored the realities of what they would later call "the PLO ministate." The *Times*'s John Kifner wasn't interested; neither were *The Washington Post*'s Jonathan Randal and William Claiborne. Their indifference was not idiosyncratic, since it let them focus their ire on Israel. Even Hijazi's piece is not quite honest. Yes, the PLO was inefficient and corrupt. But he doesn't say a word about the brutal war Arafat's men waged against the locals. In today's euphoria, no one really wants to know how the Palestinians governed. Or how they might govern. •

LEGOLAND POSTCARD

TOYS THAT BIND

By Douglas Coupland

Legoland is a real place—the Orlando of Europe—located in the center of Denmark's Jutland peninsula in a region that was once an atopian potato and dairy farm *nowhere* but is now a powerful utopian tourist *somewhere*. Lego, the modular plastic toy that has become a playtime cultural staple in the West, was first manufactured in 1947 in the nearby town of Billund—hence Legoland's somewhat random-seeming location. When families in Antwerp, Nancy, Linz or Bern discuss holiday locales, Legoland is the focus of untold Eurobrat tantrums.

Legoland, which opened in 1968, is a big attraction. Last year it took in 1,284,831 visitors (touché Euro-Disney). Legoland consists of 42 million bricks configured into thousands of waist-high exhibits covering 120,000m^2. There is a Lego Neuschwanstein (236,000 bricks) and a Lego Bergen, Norway, with a teeny funicular railway. There is a Lego Amsterdam (sans Lego squatters) and there is a "Legoredo" American Wild West theme park, which has little if anything to do with Euroculture, but seems wildly popular nevertheless (*See Mount Rushmore!*, 1,500,000 bricks). Other attractions include: a Lego Taj Mahal, a Lego Statue of Liberty and even a Lego U.S. Capitol Building. A new Legoland is currently planned for Carlsbad, California, just north of San Diego.

I came to Legoland from Silicon Valley, where I had been spending time with scores of highly gifted, successful computer hardware and software engineers. In meeting these people, it quickly became apparent that every one of them had spent his or her youth heavily steeped in Lego and its highly focused, solitude-promoting culture. While a few made youthful excursions into alternate construction systems such as Meccano, Lego was their common denominator toy. As computer engineering culture is dense with any number of complex assembly languages, some sort of linguistic connection sprang to mind.

Now, I think it is safe to say that Lego is a potent three-dimensional modeling tool and a language in itself. And prolonged exposure to any language, either visual or verbal, doubtless alters the way a child perceives his or her universe. So let us examine the toy briefly.

First, Lego is ontologically not unlike computers. This is to say that a computer by itself is, well, *nothing*. Computers only become *something* when given a specific application. Ditto Lego. To use a Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet or to build a racing car—this is why we have computers and Lego. A P.C. or a Lego brick by itself is inert and pointless: a doorstop; litter. Made of acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, Lego's discrete modular bricks are indestructible and fully intended to be nothing except themselves.

Second, Lego is "binary"—a yes/no structure; that is to say, the little nubblies atop any given Lego block are either connected to another unit of Lego, or they are not. Analog relationships do not exist.

Third, Lego anticipates a future of pixilated ideas. The forms it builds are *digital*. The charm and fun of Legoland stems from seeing what was once organic reduced to the modular: a life-size zebra seemingly built of little cubes; cathedrals as seen through the "Hard Copy" T.V. lens that converts the victim's face into small squares of color; a statue of Hans Christian Andersen as constructed by Chuck Close.

The Lego-built universe thwarts entropy, and that can be both frightening *and* cute. This is unexpected. For North Americans, Legoland seems cloyingly European and tame. At times it makes Disneyland seem almost noir. A North American is left pining for a burning Lego Los Angeles; a Lego DC-10 crashed in an Iowa cornfield; a Lego earthquake-collapsed 880 Nimitz freeway—modernism facing and dealing with crisis rather than mummifying in eternal stasis. In the same manner that one searches for irregularities among Andy Warhol's multiples, one also searches for Lego bricks that are bleached and cracked by exposure to Scandinavian winters—errors in the system; decay; disorder. Legoland highlights this century's continual battle between linearity and chaos: witness Sarajevo's bombed-out Philip Johnson-like office towers, which still seem strangely intact.

Also, amid Legoland's crenellated minibuildings and railways are thousands of hand-high, Lego-built citizens, most of whom emulate shoppers, pedestrians,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

restaurant-goers and other Eurocitizens indulging in harmless enough middle-class pursuits. Yet there are a few small figures who, either through strong wind or simple misplacement, seem to have had their narratives stripped from their lives or had darker narratives imposed on them. For example, there are six gray bodies crawling across a lawn outside the Amsterdam-plex, past a field of digital-looking black and white cows, looking, for all the world, as though they had survived the fires of Waco. In Bergen, a character holding a bike outside the window of a house looks like a Peeping Tom. The brain willfully rejects the niceties presented by Lego's scamless psychic ecology.

Before any idea occurs, there must first be a dream. The Apollo rocket designers and the NASA engineers of Houston and Sunnyvale grew up in the 1930s and 1940s dreaming of Buck Rogers. And so when this aerospace generation grew old enough, they chose to make those dreams real. The children of Lego grew up dreaming of another world—a seamless world of HAL 9000, of "I Robot," modularity, indestructibility, sound bites, acrylonitrile butadiene styrene. And now this generation, working in high-tech "campuses" that resemble suburban rumpus rooms, is silently choosing to build CD-ROM drives and code technologies that will help bring the world closer to a vision of Legoland. The darker narratives will always take care of themselves.

DOUGLAS COUPLAND is author of *Life After God* (Pocket Books).

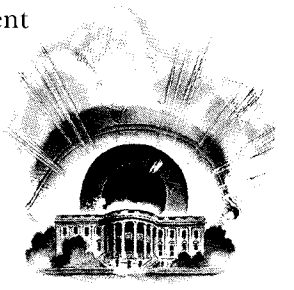
WHITE HOUSE WATCH

THE TILT

By Fred Barnes

George Mitchell of Maine, Donald Riegle of Michigan, Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio and Harlan Mathews of Tennessee have something in common besides being Democratic senators who are retiring this year. They all voted against the balanced budget amendment. If Republicans win those open seats—they've got a solid shot at all four—and break even in other races, chances are the constitutional amendment will pass. It got sixty-three votes last February, four shy of the two-thirds majority required for passage. What about the House? The amendment received 271 votes there, a dozen short. Picking up twelve seats from anti-amendment Democrats should be a snap. After all, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is projecting Republican gains of as many as twenty-five seats in November.

Democratic losses of that magnitude wouldn't jeopardize party control of Congress (Democrats have a 56-44 edge in the Senate, 256-177 in the House). But ideological control would shift to the GOP, which is allied on most issues with moderate and conservative Democrats. And what George Stephanopoulos calls "the Clinton majority" in Congress would vanish. The White House is understandably alarmed. Regular meetings, some involving President Clinton, are now devoted to plans for the fall campaign. "We take the election seriously," says Stephanopoulos. "That's why the president is getting engaged. That's why we're meeting."



The balanced budget amendment is the least of Clinton's worries. It doesn't mandate a balanced budget until 2001. But with a centrist-to-conservative majority, Republicans and fiscally conservative Democrats might be able to pass deep spending cuts, especially in social programs. Last November $90 billion in cuts and entitlement reforms proposed by Democrat Tim Penny of Minnesota and Republican John Kasich of Ohio lost by 219-213 in the House. Next year, assuming Democratic leaders permit a vote, a similar bill should pass easily. So might a line-item veto. So might a capital gains tax reduction or an increase in the children's exemption. And so on.

In the Senate, the magic number for Republicans is four, not seven. A four-seat gain would bring the number of Republicans to forty-eight, enough for Republican leader Bob Dole to stage a filibuster and derail any Clinton proposal. "We'd never lose more than seven Republicans," Dole says, thus guaranteeing the forty-one votes to sustain a filibuster. "I wouldn't say the Clinton agenda would be dead in its tracks, but it would be slowed down. They'd have to deal with us." For instance, the White House would be forced to compromise on its top item for 1995, welfare reform. The president wants to couple a cutoff after two years on welfare with new spending on day care, job training and community service jobs. But Dole opposes new spending. "It's not welfare reform if it costs more," he says. If Republicans gain four seats this fall (or maybe as few as two or three), Dole will have to be accommodated.

What are the chances of GOP ideological control? Pretty good. In the Senate, Republicans find a target-rich environment. Not only are the Mitchell, Riegle, Metzenbaum and Mathews seats vulnerable, but Republicans have a real shot at defeating Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, Chuck Robb of Virginia and Harris Wofford of Pennsylvania. And Republican John Kyl is already the favorite to replace retiring Democrat Dennis DeConcini of Arizona. In the House, GOP prospects are even better. The two most respected experts on House races, Mark Gersh of the liberal National Committee for an Effective Congress and analyst Charlie Cook, are predicting substantial gains. "The most likely number right now approaches twenty," says Gersh. "Twenty-five is not impossible. The high teens is what I currently think."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cook says Republicans should win at least fourteen or fifteen seats, maybe as many as twenty-five. "This sure as hell looks like an historic opportunity for Republicans," he says. A pickup of sixteen, for example, would give Republicans 193 seats, the most since 1956.

That wouldn't guarantee a deep ideological shift. Some pickups are likely in seats now held by moderate or conservative Democrats. This happened on May 10, when Republican Frank Lucas won the Oklahoma seat of Democrat Glenn English, who had resigned. English was hardly a Clinton stalwart, having voted against the president's budget last year. The Republican victory, a White House official says, was "no net gain for them, no net loss for us." Fine, but if the losses are large enough in November, the Clinton balance could tilt decisively. "If the Democrats lose twenty, they've lost ideological control," insists Gersh. "If they lose fifteen, they *may* lose ideological control. Ten probably doesn't do it."

Clinton's ability to thwart Republican gains isn't great, but he'll try. "If we follow through on the crime bill and the health care plan, you'll see fewer losses and a maintenance of the Clinton majority," insists Stephanopoulos. But the "tides and trends of history are against us," concedes a White House official. The party out of power invariably gains seats in midterm elections, and this time there's the additional spur of retirements (predominantly Democrats), redistricting (along GOP-favored lines) and revenge. That's George Bush's revenge. His campaign was so pathetic in 1992 that Republican seats, particularly on the West Coast, fell to Democrats. Some are bound to revert in 1994.

Dole and soon-to-be House Republican leader Newt Gingrich have decided to repeat what the GOP did in the 1980 election, the Reagan landslide. All Republican House and Senate candidates, incumbents and challengers, will gather on the Capitol steps on September 27. They'll tout a ten-point program to be passed immediately should Republicans capture the House and Senate. The GOP agenda starts, Gingrich says, with the Shays Act "to apply to Congress every law that applies to the rest of the country." Also on Gingrich's list: an audit of House books for the past ten years, a legal reform bill, a boost in the tax deduction for children, congressional term limits. Dole wants the balanced budget amendment and line-item veto, too.

Clinton's nightmare isn't the Gingrich agenda, but Gingrich himself. As House Republican leader, he'd be positioned to do to President Clinton what Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell did to President Bush, namely, destroy his presidency. Mitchell stymied Bush across the board, blocking every economic growth measure. And Gingrich is just as tough, shrewd, partisan and single-minded. Congressional Democrats won't have anyone to match him or Dole.

Of course, Gingrich claims Republicans aren't interested in destroying Clinton. "We're not capable of doing that," he says. "We're too patriotic. It's impossible for us to be as systematically destructive of the national interest as George Mitchell was. That's why we passed NAFTA." If Clinton believes that, he's a one-termer for sure. •

COURT WATCH

EVEN STEPHEN

By Jeffrey Rosen

By nominating Stephen Breyer to the Supreme Court, the Democrats have, however reluctantly or inadvertently, weaned themselves from Warrenism at last. Over the past four decades, as the excesses of the Warren Court provoked the equally ideological excesses of the Rehnquist Court, liberals and conservatives have accused each other of politicizing the judiciary. Now, with the nominations of Breyer and Ruth Bader-Ginsburg, President Clinton can claim credit for unilaterally breaking free of the vicious cycle by choosing two gifted, scholarly judges, both respected by liberals and conservatives, both steeped in administrative law and legal process rather than in constitutional theatrics.

But the terms of the truce are a little poignant. Senator Edward Kennedy, the bogeyman of Bork, is Breyer's most prominent champion. And President Clinton, after praising Breyer's devotion to the Bill of Rights, compared him to Learned Hand, the Warren Court's most fervent critic and an advocate of radical judicial abstinence.

Of course it was painful to watch Clinton's distress on May 13 as he announced the selection of a man who was plainly not his first choice. Though Clinton remained sentimentally attached to the model of a big-hearted politician in the tradition of Earl Warren, he forced himself, for want of a politically or medically viable alternative, to choose the antithesis of his own ideal. The legal and political culture had evolved too far to resurrect the idols of 1954. In the Rose Garden, Clinton invoked the fortieth anniversary of *Brown* v. *Board of Education* as a reminder "of the central and powerful role the United States Supreme Court plays in our national life and our society." But the nostalgic reference only emphasized the Court's vastly diminished role today.

If Clinton, by embracing activism and restraint in the same breath, seemed unsure of what a liberal justice should represent, other Democrats are unsure as well. Unlike conservatives, who have defined themselves by their opposition to Warrenism (until Clinton pulled the rug out from under them), liberals now have no

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

generally accepted judicial paradigm. By and large, this is a healthy development; for liberals have largely lost interest in the nation's courts as an instrument of social change. In the cases that dominate the Supreme Court's increasingly obscure docket—mostly criminal law and statutory interpretation—a rough fidelity to Congress's intentions is the most that liberals have come to expect. Only because the political stakes are so low could the president bring himself to squander two appointments on, as he put it, "the quality in the justice that matters most—excellence."

The Court, however, should become less dysfunctional once Breyer and Ginsburg have found their voices. Clinton's achievement seems all the more impressive when you compare the scholarly distinction of Breyer and Ginsburg with the superficiality of Sandra Day O'Connor, Anthony Kennedy and Clarence Thomas. (And for all the pouting about the messy selection process, Clinton limited his short lists to generally first-rate candidates). The moderation of the Clinton justices should also help put the extremism of Thomas and Antonin Scalia into perspective. On a court of Blackmuns and Marshalls, Scalia often seemed like the voice of reason. Now his strengths and limitations will be more apparent to the weaker minds on the Court, who are too easily swayed by the force of his increasingly harsh rhetoric.

But if there are lots of reasons to celebrate the Breyer nomination, it is hard not to feel a little wistful for the more colorful, polarized era that has passed. This will be the first Court since the 1920s without a consistently liberal voice: ever since Brandeis, at least one justice has felt instinctive sympathy for people on the fringe of the political process. And even Harry Blackmun, for all his sentimentality, at least served the useful institutional role of taking consistently liberal positions against which his colleagues could define themselves. Result-oriented justices such as Kennedy and O'Connor are often less concerned with reasoned legal argument than with positioning themselves to maintain an illusion of moderate centrism. Once the left wing of the Court has evaporated, the center may rearrange itself accordingly.

In praising Breyer as a consensus-builder, further-

For Lew

Editors' Note: On May 11 Lewis B. Puller Jr. committed suicide at his home in Virginia. The son of Chesty Puller, a Marine general who retired in 1955 as the most decorated soldier in the corps' history, he was severely crippled after stepping on a mine in Vietnam in 1968. His 1991 Pulitzer Prize-winning book, Fortunate Son, *was an account of his childhood, his time in Vietnam and the often tortured life he led after the war. Bob Kerrey, a Democratic senator from Nebraska and a friend of Puller's, was also injured in Vietnam. What follows is a eulogy Kerrey wrote upon his friend's death, but never gave.*

We celebrate your life, Lew Puller. You had 48 years on God's earth. Born the year the Second World War ended, when America was full of the optimism of a great moral and military victory, we all came to know you: your father, your mother, your sisters, your wife and children, your fellow patients and friends.

You and I first exchanged greetings in a hospital ward. I had just been admitted and you—more seasoned by that time—came to visit. I hope you didn't mind that I stayed in bed. You, beginning twenty-five years in your wheelchair, asked about my pain, a gesture that impresses me more now than it did then.

In your autobiography, you said you "felt set apart from humanity" by the terrible and visible nature of your injury. Of course you were. I wish you could have seen how you had to be set apart in order to reach us like you did. You reached us with your great dignity and pride and perseverance. You asked us to help carry you up many stairs that sometimes stood in your way; without asking for our help, you lifted us by climbing the mountain that was always in your way.

You made us uncomfortable, Lew. We didn't always find it easy to look at you. Your body reminded us of something we would just as soon forget. It's more than the Vietnam War, much more.

Vietnam is a part of what we don't want to remember, of course. Your final unwillingness to endure life any longer made our friends afraid that we might feel the same. The tragedy of your torment, of never being able to find peace on this earth, reminds us of war's terrible price.

We wish it weren't so, but freedom is won and secured with more than words and promises. Your blood, Lew, your body, Lew, secured it. You secured it even though Vietnam became a terrible mistake and even though you never fought the one battle that would have given you and Chesty a night on the family porch in Saluda drinking bourbon and talking father to son, son to father.

You also remind us that chasing our father's dreams can be a dangerous business. Even as we do it we deny that it is so. Then one day we wake up and realize we have become the person we never thought we would be.

You remind us of something else, dear friend, Lewis. You remind us that we should take a little time to do the important work of saving the lives of those we love. You didn't die of cancer, or a heart attack, or an automobile accident. You died because you did not feel your life was worth living.

It *was* worth living. I am angry at you for not seeing that, for leaving all of us behind to search without hope of finding the answer. But when the anger subsides I must face this question: Could I have saved your life? Oh, I wish the answer was an easy "no." I wish the word "yes" didn't float so stubbornly into view.

When I heard the news that you were back on the pills, I was in Nebraska for a political event. I was home when the call came that you were in trouble. When I heard your voice and the state you were in, I was confused and troubled. We talked many times that Saturday and I—after consulting with friends who suffer the disease alcoholism—talked you into treatment.

I felt proud of myself, secure in the belief I had done all I could. Professionals would take it from here. Like so many of our generation, I turn to professionals a lot. I have grown accustomed to hiring people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more, Clinton repeated a misunderstanding of the dynamics of the Rehnquist Court. This is an institution paralyzed by too much consensus, not too little. In case after unanimous case, lazy opinions are handed down that announce results but refuse to justify themselves with legal reasoning. The Court needs less compromise, less efficiency and less smoothing over of intellectual differences. It needs a powerful liberal mind, engaged by ideas and familiar with current scholarship, who can expose the sleight of hand behind many of the conservative interpretive theories. Ginsburg could play this role if she chose; but her defining virtue as a judge has always been her cautious sense of limits, subordinating her liberal impulses to judicial restraint. At oral arguments—in the *Kiryas Joel* and the abortion access cases, for example—she has focused more on the technical and procedural issues of litigating strategy than on the underlying constitutional issues. Although it is still too early for evaluations, she seems more comfortable as a judicial priest than a judicial prophet.

As for Judge Breyer, his opinions have always been bolder than Ginsburg's, and he is more willing to work the law purely, rethinking entire doctrines from scratch. But despite Clinton's rote praise, Breyer has not yet had the opportunity, as an appellate judge or an administrative law scholar, to think systematically about the Bill of Rights. One question worth pursuing in his confirmation hearings is whether the pragmatism that has guided him in the past is an appropriate principle for constitutional analysis.

"The Constitution and the law must be more than mere words," Breyer said in the Rose Garden. "They must work as a practical reality. And I will certainly try to make law work for people, because that is its defining purpose in a government of the people." But there is another view of the Constitution that says the role of a justice is not to reach pragmatic solutions to disputes between private parties, but to interpret and apply enduring Constitutional principles, regardless of their immediate consequences.

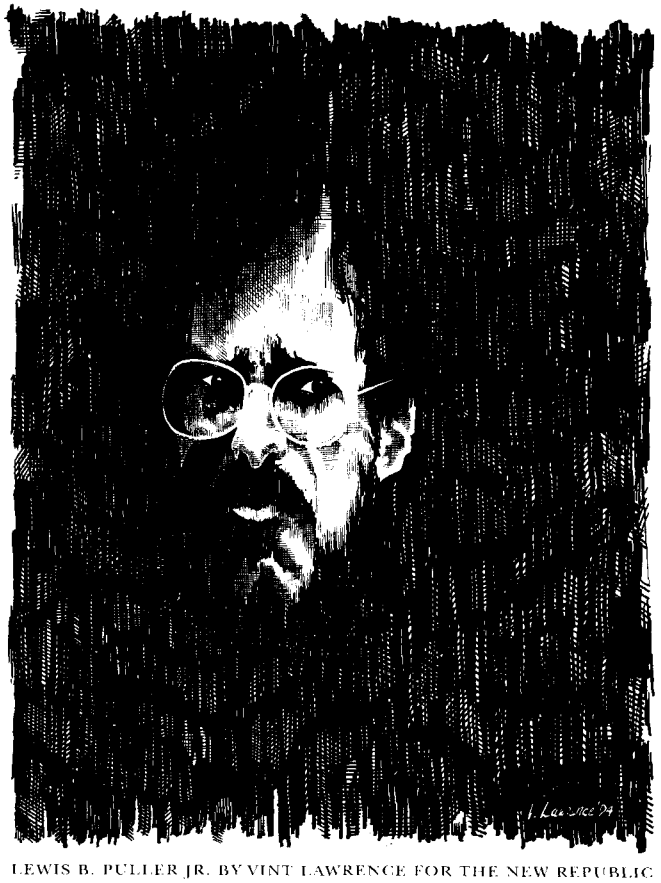
Breyer also has a powerful, academic urge to rationalize and synthesize areas of law that tend to evolve in irrational ways. When Brit Hume of ABC News asked

to take care of my loved ones when they are hurting, alone and in need of help.

Reminding us of this would be a great legacy, Lew. If you snapped us out of this get-somebody-else-to-do-it stupor, that would be a great legacy. That would be as big a gift as your own splendid example of triumph and accomplishment. And, that would be so much better than the story: another tormented Vietnam veteran bites the dust.

You noticed it from your slow-moving wheelchair, Lew. We Americans have gotten too busy to do the important things. Our schedules are too full to help our friends. Our jobs demand that we neglect our families. Our hunger for success leaves us no appetite for loving others.

The great American economic machine that roared to such triumphs during your 48 years has left us rich in numbers and poor in spirit. I wish the shock of your death could awaken us. I wish your death could awaken the few hundred thousand veterans of the Vietnam War who still *may not* have come home, who wander our streets, or who walk the same alleys of despair that you walked.



LEWIS B. PULLER JR. BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

And, I wish your death could awaken the millions of Americans who chase their father's dreams, who are asleep to a life of love and personal commitment to others.

I wish your death will awaken us to the liberating truth that only by loving others can we love ourselves. Two days after your death I read a statement by a woman who was describing another woman's beginnings as a scientist. "So, there was no going back: she had to fight for survival among the mysteries of life. And what human beings want more than anything else is to become human beings."

It is not our hands that make us human, nor our legs. It is not the shape of our noses or the thickness of our hair, or the texture of our skin. We are human because of our hearts and the souls that fill our hearts.

Lewis Burwell Puller, you had a heart and a soul that was very much human. You were set apart only in your mind. Now, I commend your soul to God and pray that you find the peace that eluded you on Earth.

BOB KERREY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Breyer what he meant by the Blackmunesque statement that judges should "mak[e] life better for ordinary citizens," the nominee replied: "There's the Constitution, the Bill of Rights ... laws and statutes, regulations, rules, common law—there's a whole mass of material that somehow, sometimes, in some way, is supposed to fit together. And what is it supposed to do, seen as a whole? What it's supposed to do, seen as a whole, is allow all people—all people—to live together in a society where they have so many different views, so many different needs; to live together in a way that is more harmonious, that is better, so that they can work productively together." This is a nineteenth-century rationalist's view of the law—more Charles Pierce than Harry Blackmun; and its implications for the Bill of Rights will be fascinating to explore.

It's tempting, for those of us who have been waiting for a daring and creative liberal craftsman, to invest Breyer with all sorts of romantic expectations; but this is no time for pedestals. We are surrounded by the rubble of Warren and Rehnquist; and liberals and conservatives will have to struggle, as they did after the fall of communism, to redefine themselves in the new judicial world. The age of judicial heroics has ended, and for that we have President Clinton to thank. •

Battle-scarred journalists heal.

RWANDA THERAPY

By Roger Rosenblatt

In Nairobi, Kenya, two weeks ago, a group of journalists sat around a table in a hotel bar, sipping beers and telling war stories. Such scenes are a cliché of our trade. They usually occur in the lulls between events in a newsworthy place, or even before the events begin. They mix a little swagger with some sick jokes and a good deal of can-you-top-this competitiveness, but they also have a genuine quality, because the tales journalists tell involve their own feelings.

Our talk took place on the night before we were scheduled to go into Tanzania and Rwanda to report for our different publications on the world's most recent episode of human depravity. At our table, along with a Reuters cameraman and a couple of relief workers, sat Gunnar Kopperud, a Norwegian journalist; Els Detemmuman, a T.V. journalist from Belgium; and I. We had met for the first time that day. Els was excited because she had just learned that a place had opened up for her on a U.N. flight to Kigali, the besieged capital of Rwanda, the following morning. Journalist or no, she would be a target for attack by the murderous Hutus, who have a historic hatred of the Belgians. We half-joked about getting her a T-shirt with a Union Jack to disguise her identity.

Gunnar and I were booked on a press charter to Ngara, Tanzania. From there we would drive to the Benako refugee camp, where 200,000 Rwandans, mostly Hutus, had fled. Gunnar, who has been posted in Africa since 1988, knows the territory, but it makes him melancholy. He is about 50, a handsome, well-groomed, athletic man with a wife and two grown children in Oslo. He once taught philosophy in a university.

The story he told was about the Mauritanians, refugees stuck between Senegal and their homeland, to which they cannot return. "The first time I saw them," he said, "they had just begun to settle, and they were full of life and excited to be building a new place for themselves. I watched them establish a civilization. A woman took care of me—a tall, regal, exquisitely beautiful woman. She fed me, washed my clothes, watched over me as I slept. We didn't have an affair, but we did have a sudden deep friendship, better than an affair.

"A year and a half later I went back to see how the community had progressed. The camp had deteriorated. They had plenty of food, water and medicine provided by the relief agencies, but all their original initiative had disappeared. They were mired in thoughts of their own victimization. Their spirit was gone. They told me: 'We get up in the morning and there is nothing to do. We lie around, we talk, we lie around.'

"I stayed with them then, watching all that aimless tedium around me, and grew more and more depressed. I read the Spinoza I always carry with me; it usually saves me. But on the fifth or sixth day in the camp, I began to tremble and cry uncontrollably. The hopelessness of it, you know? Then I spotted the woman who had been so kind to me, and I rushed up and engulfed her in a hug. She hung there limp in my arms. She had no idea who I was. Others told me that she had lost the respect of the community; she had taken a common-law husband and had lost a baby. 'Don't you remember me?' I asked her. 'Should I?' she said. That night I knew that I was having a nervous breakdown."

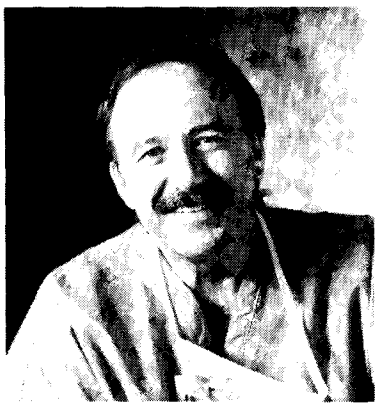
"How did you pull yourself out?" I asked.

"I started taking notes. That small ordinary act gave me purpose. If those people didn't have a future, well, I did. I wrote, and I used the words like a life rope."

Els, who looks to be in her late 20s, is blond, with a forceful voice and wide-open eyes. She had intended to come to Africa with her fiancé a few months ago, but he was killed on assignment, so she came on her own. She told of something she had seen only a few days before in northern Rwanda. She was traveling with her T.V. crew when their truck was stopped by Hutu militia. Ahead of them, in the middle of the road, some twenty-five Tutsi men, women and children had been herded into a circle. Then the militia waded in with machetes,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PATIENTS GET ATTACHED TO GOOD DOCTORS... SO DO WE.



It takes more than a good bedside manner to work in one of our health care networks. It takes a commitment to ensuring patient satisfaction... a record of delivering successful medical outcomes... and a dedication to providing cost-minded treatments.

We're among America's leading managed care companies. We directly employ thousands of doctors and other medical professionals. Full-time. On our payrolls. We also contract with hundreds of thousands of other accomplished providers through our health care networks. But not everyone makes the grade. It takes more than a good bedside manner.

Managed care works... and it works because of good doctors. Patients get attached to those doctors... So do we.

Let's pass health care reform. This year. But let's not jeopardize the quality of health care that millions of satisfied Americans already receive.

MANAGED CARE WORKS.

THE ALLIANCE FOR MANAGED COMPETITION

Providing Health Coverage for 60 Million Americans

AETNA CIGNA METLIFE THE PRUDENTIAL THE TRAVELERS INSURANCE COMPANIES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hacking at the people until they all were dead and many lay in pieces.

"The Tutsis made no complaint," said Els. "They seemed to accept the slaughter as their fate."

"Why didn't the militia kill you and your crew?"

"They were entirely indifferent to what the world would think," she said. "When they finished, they signaled us to move ahead and we drove on through the blood."

"Are you all right now?"

"I haven't slept since that day," she said. "And I don't like to be alone." Growing self-conscious, she laughed a bit, and then fell silent.

When my turn came, I told the story of Peov, a Cambodian girl. Writing a story on children in different war zones in 1981, I had come to Khao i Dang, a camp on the Thai-Cambodian border for refugees who had fled from the Khmer Rouge. A couple of years earlier 8-year-old Peov had made it there on her own, having escaped from one of Pol Pot's slave labor camps. She had walked more than thirty miles, and when she arrived she did not say a word; nor did she speak for a year after that. She did produce a drawing, though, of a curious circular device. Beside it, she drew some soldiers and children.

When, with the help of a psychologist, Peov finally regained her voice, she explained the drawing. The soldiers were Khmer Rouge. The children were Peov and her friends. The circular device was a portable guillotine devised for use on children who tried to escape the camps, yet it was not the soldiers who operated it. They forced the other children, like Peov, to do that.

"How did you react when you listened to the girl?" Els asked me.

"Dispassionately, or what we call professionally," I said. "On some level, I couldn't really believe what I was hearing. Her face was so quiet, her voice so matter-of-fact. Like Gunnar, I started taking notes. But then, in New York, weeks later, I exploded in crying jags, and I did not want to speak to friends." We ordered more beer to cover the fact that no one was saying anything.

Journalists are thought to be a callous lot, and much of the time we are. But my experience with colleagues, who see much more of the cruelty of the world than I, is that they take suffering very hard. Like cops, they usually see people—aggressors and victims—at their worst. They also see them over and over again.

Most journalists react in three stages. In the first stage, when they are young (like Els), they respond to atrocities with shock and revulsion and perhaps a twinge of guilty excitement that they are seeing something others will never see: life at its dreadful extremes. In the second stage the atrocities become familiar and repetitive, and journalists begin to sound like Spiro Agnew; if you have seen one loss of dignity and spirit, or one loss of limb, or a loss of head, you've seen them all. Too many journalists get stuck in this stage. They get bogged down in the routineness of the suffering. Embittered, spiteful and inadequate to their work, they curse out their bosses back home for not according them respect; they hate the people on whom they report. Worst of all, they don't allow themselves to enter the third stage, in which everything gets sadder and wiser, worse and strangely better.

Gunnar is in the third stage. It sets in after years of observing the varieties of destruction of which people are capable. For one thing, you realize that the destruction will never stop. People will always find a way to do one another in, inflicting as much pain and torment as possible. If you take away their H-bombs, they will draw their machetes.

What's more, they require very little in the way of an excuse or outside encouragement. Take Rwanda. Say that the pitiless slaughter of the Tutsis is entirely tribally motivated, or that it is entirely politically motivated. But then you see a 5-year-old boy with his arms cut off, and you know that under all other rational inspirations lies one that is purely, savagely human.

In the third stage, however, something happens to one's own work. In stage one you persuade yourself that the mere telling of the war story is valuable because the people who read it will know what they did not know, and some may act on that knowledge. In stage two you don't care about any of that, and anyway, you don't believe it. In stage three you continue not to believe it, and you have years of proof to support your hopelessness. Words do not lead to deeds, not good ones. If something improves a bit in one place (rare), it disintegrates in a dozen others. I look at Els and I see a woman trying to kill herself because the love of her life is gone, and so she flings herself into life-threatening situations. Indeed, the U.N. plane she was on the following morning was fired upon at Kigali and forced to turn back. But I look at Gunnar and see a man in much deeper despair, someone who may be rescued by the love of his wife and children but who, having seen so much darkness, is nearly irretrievable.

And yet he sits around a table, has a beer and tells his war stories, as we all do, because there is something mysteriously redeeming in the telling. This is all one has, after the years: these war stories. Nothing productive comes of them, no moral lesson emerges, and yet they make impressions so deep and painful that people are compelled to tell them, and other people are compelled to listen.

"I did not tell you," said Els, "about the piece of a human body I saw floating in the river. My crew and I just stood there on the shore along with a number of Hutus, staring at this piece of body, floating. No one could make out what it was. A leg? A head? A torso? The people giggled and pointed, and made a guessing game. Finally, a teenage boy waded into the river to see who had guessed correctly. But when he lifted the piece and presented it to the crowd, I could not look. I turned away." Then Els looked around the table and caught the disappointment in our eyes, since we, too, wanted to know what that body part was, and were not ashamed. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

A New IDEA

Writing laws is not an exact science. No matter how carefully crafted a piece of legislation is, it can have design flaws—gray areas or big loopholes—which lead to disputes, court cases and, often, decisions that obscure or pervert its intent. This is what's happened to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA defines services for disabled children, a group whose educational needs used to be largely ignored, but there have been serious problems with a number of its important provisions. IDEA will be up for reauthorization soon, and Congress needs to fill in some blanks and rewrite some language in the law.

IDEA requires that youngsters with disabilities get a "free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment." What does that mean? It has generally been accepted that "least restrictive" depends on the nature of a particular child's disability, so a "continuum of placements" should be available. But now, advocates of "full inclusion" insist on a totally different interpretation of "least restrictive." They say it means that every child must be placed in a regular classroom, regardless of the nature and severity of the child's disability. Full inclusion is equated with fairness, but a one-size-fits-all approach is unfair to youngsters with disabilities, who differ greatly in what they need and can do. It is also unfair to the other kids in the class. By writing "continuum of placements" into the law, Congress can make sure that youngsters with disabilities are treated as individuals.

Those who created IDEA wanted to prevent kids with disabilities from being jerked around from one placement to another. But one of their tools, the "stay-put" provision, has turned out to be a nightmare for other students and teachers. According to "stay-put," once a child has been placed in a class, he can't be excluded because of behavior related to his disability for more than ten days a year without the consent of his parents or a formal hearing process that could take months. This means that a kid with a behavioral disorder who constantly disrupts the class—or even assaults the teacher or other kids—cannot be excluded. Congress can fix this problem by amending the law to allow responsible alternative arrangements for disabled students who are violent or disruptive until the issue of where they should be placed is resolved. Their rights can be protected without sacrificing the education of other students in the class—some or all of whom may also be disabled—or endangering their safety and that of their teachers.

IDEA was intended to serve the best educational interests of students with disabilities without compromising the education of other students.

The success of any placement depends to a large extent on the classroom teacher. Teachers who are going to work with disabled children must be adequately trained, but many in regular classrooms are ill-prepared or unprepared to work with students who have disabilities. IDEA needs to be amended to require that districts provide adequate training for all teachers who work with disabled students. A rewritten law should also authorize teachers to refer their students for services under IDEA. And it should specify that a child's teacher be part of the team writing the individual education plan required for children receiving services under IDEA and attend all meetings of the team. Except for parents, teachers know better than anybody else what a child needs. The child's teacher is also in the best position to know whether or not the services called for are actually being provided. The revised IDEA should allow teachers to report failure to provide services and offer protection to teachers who might hesitate to blow the whistle for fear of reprisal.

But a rewrite job alone, no matter how good it is, will not fix IDEA because lack of funding is as responsible for the distortion of the law as murky language. The services IDEA requires are very expensive—New York State now spends 30 percent of all new education money on them—but Congress has never come close to appropriating the 40 percent it promised. Many school districts have simply cut back their regular programs to pay for these unfunded mandates. And many districts are trying to control costs, under the pretext of inclusion, by dumping students with disabilities into regular classrooms without necessary supports for the youngsters or help for the teachers. This undermines the education of *all* students. And because regular programs have been cut back to pay for IDEA services, many kids who are identified as having learning problems, but who could normally get the help they need in a regular classroom, are pushed into special ed.

IDEA was intended to serve the best educational interests of students with disabilities without compromising the education of other students. Some serious attention from Congress, when the reauthorization comes up, will make it possible for IDEA to live up to this aim.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is China the next Iran?

SHAH DENG?

By James Mann

Over the next few weeks, if you listen for even a short time to the wrangling over what the Clinton administration should do about trading with China, you are going to hear something like this: China is in the midst of dramatic economic growth. When China gets rich enough and develops a middle class, it is going to follow the same path as its East Asian neighbors, Taiwan and South Korea. With economic growth, China's politics will be transformed. Through some evolutionary process, it will eventually waltz its way from a repressive one-party state into a democracy.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher heard several renditions of this argument when he met with the American Chamber of Commerce in Beijing last March. "The trend line [on human rights] is moving in the right direction, and what is driving it is economics," Phillip Carmichael, the chamber's president, lectured. The foreign policy establishment is on message as well. "Economic reform, we believed, would in the long run lead to political liberalization, the surest way to ensure human rights for all in China," former secretary of state James Baker wrote recently about the Bush administration's China policy.

Unfortunately, the whole China-will-evolve-into-democracy argument is at best complacent and at worst simply wrong. It's wrong about the relevance of Asian models like Taiwan and South Korea to China's history. It's wrong about the role of the United States. Most of all, it's wrong about China. If there is any model at all for modern-day China, it is not, in fact, to be found in contemporary Asia, but in the Iran of the late 1970s.

The United States has always understood China by falsely analogizing it to other countries. In the 1950s the analogy was the Soviet Union, an identically rigid totalitarian state. Now, the false analogies are Taiwan and South Korea—East Asian states that have made an inevitable transition to democracy, it is argued, thanks to economic growth. The new analogies are just as inaccurate. There was nothing inevitable about either country's democratic revolution. These two countries, whose populations combined amount to one single Chinese province, were brought to democracy after quiet American pressure. The United States began with the leverage of economic aid. From 1950 to 1965 Taiwan received an average of $100 million per year in nonmilitary aid—more than 6 percent of its gross national product—making it the largest beneficiary of American assistance. In a smaller way, South Korea benefited from the same sort of American support.

But U.S. economic influence—and fast economic growth—didn't translate into automatic democratization. To be sure, during the late 1980s, once-authoritarian governments in Taiwan and South Korea opened the way for popular elections. But in both cases, the governments were responding to considerable American encouragement. The American role was dramatic in the case of South Korea. During the summer of 1987, in the midst of a political crisis that included street demonstrations, Reagan administration officials (in Washington and in Seoul) went to great lengths—both in public speeches by Assistant Secretary of State Gaston Sigur and in private diplomatic contracts—to persuade South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan to step aside and open the way for the country's first presidential elections.

In Taiwan, America's part in galvanizing political change was slower and more indirect. In the late 1980s, during the last years of his life, Taiwanese President Chiang Ching-kuo lifted martial law and opened the way for an opposition party. At the time, Taiwan faced growing diplomatic isolation and was under intense pressure from Congress to democratize. At one point the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Claiborne Pell; the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, Stephen Solarz; and its ranking minority member, Jim Leach, formed the Committee for Democracy on Taiwan. There also was subtle goading from the Reagan administration.

In both cases, there was no simple relationship between growth and liberalization, just as in China. Indeed, China's recent acceleration of growth has led to an intensification of political repression. Certainly, there is greater diversity in China's cultural life today. But that is only true so long as individuals don't engage in politics or criticize the government in public. People are free in China only insofar as they *stay away* from politics. In fact, those Chinese who want to challenge the government face the same choices they faced in 1989: shut up, go underground or leave the country.

The recent roundups of dissidents during the Christopher trip to Beijing (and during similar visits to China by French, Japanese and Australian leaders) make clear how little progress there has been. In fact, in 1994 alone there have been at least eighty-eight new arrests and trials of political and religious dissidents. Democracy activist Wei Jingsheng, who was released from prison in September, when China hoped to land the 2000 Olympics, was thrown back in jail in April.

Assuming that China's economic progress will inevitably lead to democracy is dangerous because it ignores the possibility of other outcomes. If China continues to grow, to develop a private sector and to build up its military forces while stamping out all political opposition, it could develop a new form of Asian fascism. Anyway, if we're in the questionable business of comparing China to much smaller Asian neighbors,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Boom Booming

Even if President Clinton refuses to grant China Most Favored Nation status to the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Chinese shouldn't be too worried. Their economy will weather the storm, thanks in large part to the People's Liberation Army, which has become a remarkable source of profits for the last great bastion of communism. Since 1985 the Chinese army has raked in more than $13 billion from the international arms bazaar, peddling just about every kind of conventional weapon to twenty-five countries, from Albania to Zimbabwe.

The Chinese government has never been enthusiastic about supporting international arms-reduction agreements. Part of the reason may be that wheeling and dealing in weaponry provides much of the hard currency the country needs to modernize its arsenal. Also, by buying or scavenging and then cloning and reselling some of the most sophisticated combat equipment from the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Russia, China undermines the nations it distrusts, putting arms in the hands of the enemies of its enemies. This strategy of *yi jian shuang diao* ("getting two birds with one stone") is aimed at gradually tipping the military balance of power in China's favor.

Most of China's weapons business is handled by two state-owned import-export corporations: Xinshidai (New Era), which specializes in tactical missile sales, and Baoli (Poly Technologies), which markets just about any weapon in the Chinese army's arsenal. "Guns 'R' Us" is how a former Poly Technologies officer, who is Chinese and who spoke only on the condition of anonymity, jokingly describes the company. "The toys we buy and sell," he says, "are for the generals and admirals to play with. Big high-tech toys—planes, ships, missiles and torpedoes." Run by the *Taizi*, or "princelings"—sons and daughters of the PRC's elite—Poly is endowed with enormous political clout. Until his recent army promotion, one of its founders and general managers was He Ping, Deng Xiaoping's son-in-law. Poly is also endowed with a lot of cash. According to Xie Datong, the company's executive director, Poly's revenue last year totaled $1 billion.

The company, which is under the direct control of the Central Military Commission, started in a room in the Beijing Hotel in 1981. Today, it is based in Poly Plaza, a Beijing business and hotel complex. Its officers are provided cars, apartments, hotel suites and expense accounts. A primary mission is to scavenge the world for state-of-the-art military equipment that can be disassembled and then duplicated. Says one Chinese source, who also insisted on anonymity, "They copied everything in the military but the uniforms."

The Chinese have a long and happy history of cloning weapons—one that dates back to well before the creation of Poly Technologies. In 1969, when a Soviet T-62 tank broke through the ice on the Heilong Jiang river bordering China, the Chinese army retrieved it and reproduced it during the next decade. During the Vietnam War the Chinese manned Soviet-made surface-to-air missile batteries. After the war they cloned the technology (naming it the Red Flag system), and then used it against high-altitude reconnaissance flights from Taiwan. In the case of some Soviet weapons, the Chinese rendition improved on the original. For example, the Chinese version of the Soviet MiG-21 has much better avionics and fire control.

Today, Poly representatives are shopping for an aircraft carrier in Russia, where, in the wake of the cold war, they've been picking up planes and weapons at fire sale prices: AL-76 and YAK-46 transports; SU-27 and IL-76 aircraft. Five years ago Poly's bid to buy the *Shangri-La*, a mothballed American carrier, was foiled when the FBI learned that Chinese engineers were copying the carrier's jet catapults, and that the ship was going to be used as a model for carrier construction and not turned into scrap. In 1991, after the Gulf war, Poly sent a team to Baghdad to search for exploded U.S. Tomahawk missile debris. Another Poly team turned up in Tehran to bid on some of the 107 jet fighters that Saddam Hussein had sent to Iran for safekeeping.

But China isn't just a consumer; it is a prolific producer, too. Chinese knockoffs of Western military equipment have been turning up all over the Middle East. During the eight-year Iran-Iraq war China racked up arms sales totaling more than $8 billion from the two sides. Much of this money came from the sale of HY-2 Silkworm surface-to-surface missiles, which both sides used against each other's tankers in the Straits of Hormuz. When the U.S. destroyer *Stark* was hit by two Iraqi missiles in 1987, the Chinese, hoping to entice prospective buyers, leaked the news that one of the missiles was a PRC clone of the French Exocet.

A U.S. intelligence report in 1991 claimed that Israel shared American Patriot missile technology with China. Israel denied the accusation. However, China's PL-8 ground-to-air missile bears a striking resemblance to Israel's air-to-air Python 3. And, according to a Poly source, both missiles have a "high degree" of U.S. technology, allegedly having been adapted from America's AIM-91 Sidewinder.

Some of China's cloned weapons now pose a threat to their country of origin. For example, Israel's advanced 105mm tank cannon was reproduced in China and then sold to Iran and Iraq. Israeli technicians also spent time in China improving the target tracking and fire control capability of the MiG-21 and MiG-23, only to see that sophisticated technology resold to Pakistan.

China hasn't been shy about peddling military equipment to its Asian neighbors, either. In 1988, when Poly representatives found themselves in a bidding war with South Korea to build several 053-type frigates for the Royal Thai Navy, the deal was cinched when the Chinese offered to equip the ships with high-powered LM-2500 gas turbines purchased from General Electric. Theoretically, China was prohibited in its contract with G.E. from reselling the engines.

On occasion the United States has shared limited military technology with China. The classified Project 851, started during the Carter administration, resulted in construction of a series of jointly operated SIGINT (Signal Intelligence) listening posts in Xinjiang Province in northwest China, where some thirty U.S. intelligence experts are still stationed. These outposts were designed to track Russia's underground nuclear tests. Not surprisingly, the joint effort turned out to be particularly beneficial for the Chinese. They reproduced the American eavesdropping technology and set up listening posts in Tibet. Now they are able to track and monitor the communications of the U.S. Seventh Fleet.

LARRY ENGELMANN and ROY ROWAN

LARRY ENGELMANN is a professor of history at San Jose State University. ROY ROWAN is a former correspondent for *Time* magazine.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

why choose Taiwan instead of Singapore, a state that has managed to blend economic growth with authoritarian repression? (The example of Singapore also puts the lie to another piece of wishful thinking: that modern communications technology will lead to a democratic China. Singapore has computers and fax machines, but not much democracy.)

Actually, the best and most useful model in understanding where China stands today comes from outside East Asia: China now seems comparable in many respects to the Shah's Iran of the 1970s. Like the Shah's Iran, China is a large, often chaotic country with deep traditions and intense national pride. Like Iran under the Shah, China is governed by an authoritarian leader, together with an army and security apparatus, but without any political institutions through which dissent can be expressed. In the Shah's Iran and Deng Xiaoping's China, rapid economic growth created new classes of wealth, widening the gap between rich and poor and arousing intense popular resentment toward nepotism and corruption of those who profited from the reforms. According to a recent study of the Chinese economy by University of Washington Professor Nicholas Landy, "the gap between urban and rural living standards continues to be very much wider than elsewhere in Asia.... China's overall income inequality exceeds that in Taiwan and South Korea, and is comparable to that observed in several South and Southeast Asian countries."

The case of Iran under the Shah also provides a classic example of how short-sighted it can be to fail to encourage an authoritarian regime to open up legitimate channels of dissent. For a nation in the midst of rapid economic growth and social upheaval, the result can be a series of ultimately unsuccessful efforts at repression, resulting, in the end, in revolution.

Indeed, the Chinese regime is now trying to cope with a new wave of social unrest. Peasants have been complaining about being paid in government IOUs for their harvests. Increased productivity in agriculture has caused millions of peasants to leave for cities, where they have become a new "floating population," hanging around the train stations without work or roots. In China's urban areas, meanwhile, inflation is running at about 25 percent; the price of vegetables alone is up 50 percent. And bankruptcy laws and other efforts to reform overstaffed, inefficient and unprofitable state enterprises are proving to be the most sensitive of all China's economic reforms: Chinese workers are threatened with loss of the "iron rice bowl" guarantees such as lifetime job security and company-supplied housing that were the implied trade-offs for low wages. Over the past two years there have been scores of reports from Chinese cities of work actions, strikes and efforts to form unauthorized trade unions. By all indications, it is not students and intellectuals who worry the Chinese leadership now, but workers, and the regime is going to great lengths to make sure there is no urban unrest. That is the reason for the recent crackdown.

These developments inside China are the best demonstration that economic change and growing prosperity will not lead *inevitably* to democratic reforms. (There's also the small problem of how, or by what mechanism, the Chinese Communist Party will give up its monopoly on political power or fade away.) Rather, in the absence of accompanying political reform, growth may well lead to greater social instability, requiring a series of crackdowns which, in the end, will not work. What of the hope that an emerging middle class will someday induce China to become democratic? That's not likely, either, given the intensity of regional differences in China. If a middle class emerges anywhere, it will probably be in selected cities like Guangzhou and Shanghai. Without some kind of nationwide political change, these pockets of middle-class prosperity could well become a powerful force for a centrifugal breakup of China. In recent years the gross national product per person in Shanghai has been about 3.5 times the national average, and the growth rate of south China's Guangdong Province has been twice that of the nation as a whole.

Many American businessmen, for all their professed optimism about the rosy future for Chinese political pluralism, understand that things are not so simple. How else to explain why one of the policy changes U.S. companies have recently been seeking in Washington is a resumption of the federal program through which the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) insures American investment in China against political risks, such as violence, confiscation and expropriation? There has been no OPIC program in China since 1989. Apparently, American companies want the U.S. government to hold their hands in the unstable market of China.

For now, American businesses are once again attracted by the lure of a huge China market—just as they have been, on and off, since the nineteenth century. They're forgetting that in the past, the result for Western businesses has always been disillusionment, both because China's economy is cyclical and because China's agenda is never the same as that of the Western companies. And it certainly isn't the same as that of Western democracies. *Tong chuang yi meng*, the Chinese say: same bed, different dreams.

Of course, the notion that the United States can single-handedly bring democracy to China is as unrealistic as believing that capitalism alone will do the trick. But there are still good reasons, moral and practical, for trying hard to coax China to open up its political system. Doing so would lessen the chances for the sort of massive instability that could threaten not only China's huge population, but the rest of Asia. It would also be the surest way to ensure that China's future economic growth is of a sort that can lead to a sustainable future, like South Korea's, and not a cataclysm, like Iran's.

JAMES MANN, who covers national security issues for *The Los Angeles Times*, is author of *Beijing Jeep* (Touchstone).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLIC POLICY BULLETIN BOARD®

Recent Books and Reports from the Nation's Think Tanks and Advocacy Groups

PACIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Index of Leading Environmental Indicators. A Citizen's Guide on How to Think About Environmental Quality in the U.S. April 1994. Modeled after the Census Bureau's Index of Leading Economic Indicators, this report exhibits data collected by the EPA in user-friendly time-series graphs to provide a clear picture of where the U.S. has been and where we presently are in regards to air and water quality, soil erosion, forests, land use, solid waste, recycling, toxic chemicals, and more. 48 pp., $9.00. Call 800-276-7600.

INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS

Greening the GATT: Trade, Environment, and the Future by Daniel C. Esty. Former EPA NAFTA negotiator Esty argues that current international trade rules and institutions must be significantly reformed to address environmental concerns while still promoting economic growth and development. He offers new international rules and principles to help make trade and environmental policies work together to better achieve sustainable economic progress. June 1994, ISBN paper 0-88132-205-9, 300 pp., $19.95. To order call 800-229-ECON or write Institute for International Economics, Publications Department (NR), 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1207.

THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE

Partnership for Growth: a special report from The European Institute. Michel Camdessus, Vladimir Dlouhy, Bela Kadar, Stephen Oxman and other high-ranking officials offer their perspectives on trade and investment in Central and Eastern Europe. In this report from a seminar of The European Institute, the contributors provide strategies for the second stage of economic reform in the region. Edited by Peter S. Rashish. $15.00 paper. To order please call 202-895-1670 or fax 202-362-1088.

THE JOHNS HOPKINS FOREIGN POLICY INSTITUTE

The latest title in the FPI Policy Briefs series is ***Nuclear Nonproliferation: the Contributions of Germany and Japan*** by Leonard D. Spector, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Mr. Spector analyzes the American, German, and Japanese approaches to nonproliferation, finding substantial points of agreement. Spector explains why collaboration among the three allies is likely to improve further in the years ahead. $9.95. Published April 1994. To purchase this FPI Policy Brief or any other FPI publication call Public Interest Publications at 1-800-537-9359.

CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Principles for Health Care Reform: The Second Report of the CSIS Strengthening of America Commission. Senators Sam Nunn and Pete Domenici, commission chairmen; Debra L. Miller, commission executive director. The report focuses on the fiscal and economic aspects of reform, recommending progressive options to control the growth rate of health care entitlement programs. $10.00. Call 202-775-3119.

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER

IDEALISM WITHOUT ILLUSIONS: U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 1990s by George Weigel. Weigel makes a strong case for a morality that is distinctive to political life: a realistic social ethic of idealism without illusions. His book applies this kind of moral reasoning to such issues as terrorism, Islam and the West, the new human-rights debate, just war after the Gulf War, and "humanitarian intervention" in Bosnia, Haiti, and elsewhere. Published by the Ethics and Public Policy Center and William B. Eerdmans. 232 pp. $16.99 (paper). Call 202-682-1200 or 1-800-253-7521. ISBN 0-8028-0746-1.

THE PUBLIC POLICY BULLETIN BOARD® IS AN ADVERTISING SERVICE OF THE NEW REPUBLIC

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What "we the people" has wrought.

THE HYPERPLURALISM TRAP

By Jonathan Rauch

Anyone who believes Washington needs to get closer to the people ought to spend a little time with Senator Richard Lugar, the Indiana Republican. "Take a look at the people coming into my office on a normal Tuesday and Wednesday," Lugar said in a speech not long ago. "Almost every organization in our society has a national conference. The typical way of handling this is to come in on a Monday, rev up the troops, give them the bill number and send them up to the Hill. If they can't get in on Tuesday, strike again on Wednesday. I regularly have on Tuesday as many as fifteen constituent groups from Indiana, all of whom have been revved up by some skillful person to cite bills that they don't understand, have never heard of prior to that time, but with a score sheet to report back to headquarters whether I am for or against. It is so routine, it is so fierce, that at some point you [can't be] immune to it."

This is the reality of modern government. The rhetoric of modern politics, alas, is a little different. Take today's standard-issue political stem-winder, which goes something like this: "I think perhaps the most important thing that we understand here in the heartland ... is the need to reform the political system, to reduce the influence of special interests and give more influence back to the kind of people that are in this crowd tonight by the tens of thousands." That stream of boilerplate is from Bill Clinton (from his election-night speech), but it could have come from almost any politician. It's pitched in a dominant key of political rhetoric today: *standard populism*—that is, someone has taken over the government and "we" must take it back, restore government to the people, etc. But who, exactly, are those thousands of citizens who troop weekly through Senator Lugar's suite, clutching briefing packets and waving scorecards? Standard populism says they are the "special interests," those boils on the skin of democracy, forever interposing themselves between the American people and the people's servants in Washington.

Well, fifty years ago that analysis may have been useful, but not anymore. In America today, the special interests and "the people" have become objectively indistinguishable. Groups are us. As a result, the populist impulse to blame special interests, big corporations and political careerists for our problems—once a tonic—has become Americans' leading political narcotic. Worse, it actually abets the lobbying it so righteously denounces.

Begin with one of the best known yet most underappreciated facts of our time: over the past three or four decades we have busily organized ourselves into interest groups—lobbies, loosely speaking—at an astonishing rate. Interest groups were still fairly sparse in America until about the time of World War II. Then they started proliferating, and in the 1960s the pace of organizing picked up dramatically.

Consider, for instance, the numbers of groups listed in Gale Research's *Encyclopedia of Associations*. The listings have grown from fewer than 5,000 in 1956 to well over 20,000 today. They represent, of course, only a small fraction of America's universe of interest groups. Environmental organizations alone number an estimated 7,000, once you count local clean-up groups and the like; the Washington *Blade*'s resource directory lists more than 400 gay groups, up from 300 at the end of 1990. Between 1961 and 1982 the number of corporate offices in Washington increased tenfold. Even more dramatic was the explosion in the number of public-interest organizations and grass-roots groups. These barely existed at all before the 1960s; today they number in the tens of thousands and collect more than $4 billion per year from 40 million individuals, according to political scientist Ronald Shaiko of American University.

Well, so what? Groups do many good things—provide companionship for the like-minded, collect and disseminate information, sponsor contests, keep the catering industry solvent. Indeed, conventional political theory for much of the postwar period was dominated by a strain known as pluralism, which holds that more groups equals more representation equals better democracy. Yet pluralism missed something. It assumed that the group-forming process was self-balancing and stable, as opposed to self-feeding and unstable. Which is to say, it failed to grasp the danger of what American University political scientist James Thurber aptly calls hyperpluralism.

JONATHAN RAUCH is the author of *Demosclerosis: The Silent Killer of American Government* (Times Books).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In economics, inflation is a gradual increase in the price level. Up to a point, if the inflation rate is stable, people can plan around it. But if the rate starts to speed up, people start expecting more inflation. They hoard goods and dump cash, driving the inflation still faster. Eventually, an invisible threshold is crossed: the inflation now feeds on its own growth and undermines the stability of the whole economic system.

What the pluralists missed is that something analogous can happen with interest groups. People see that it pays to organize into groups and angle for benefits, so they do it. But as more groups make more demands, and as even more hungry groups form to compete with all the other groups, the process begins to feed on itself and pick up momentum. At some point there might be so many groups that they choke the political system, sow contention and conflict, even erode society's governability. That's hyperpluralism. And if it is less destabilizing than hyperinflation, it may be more insidious.

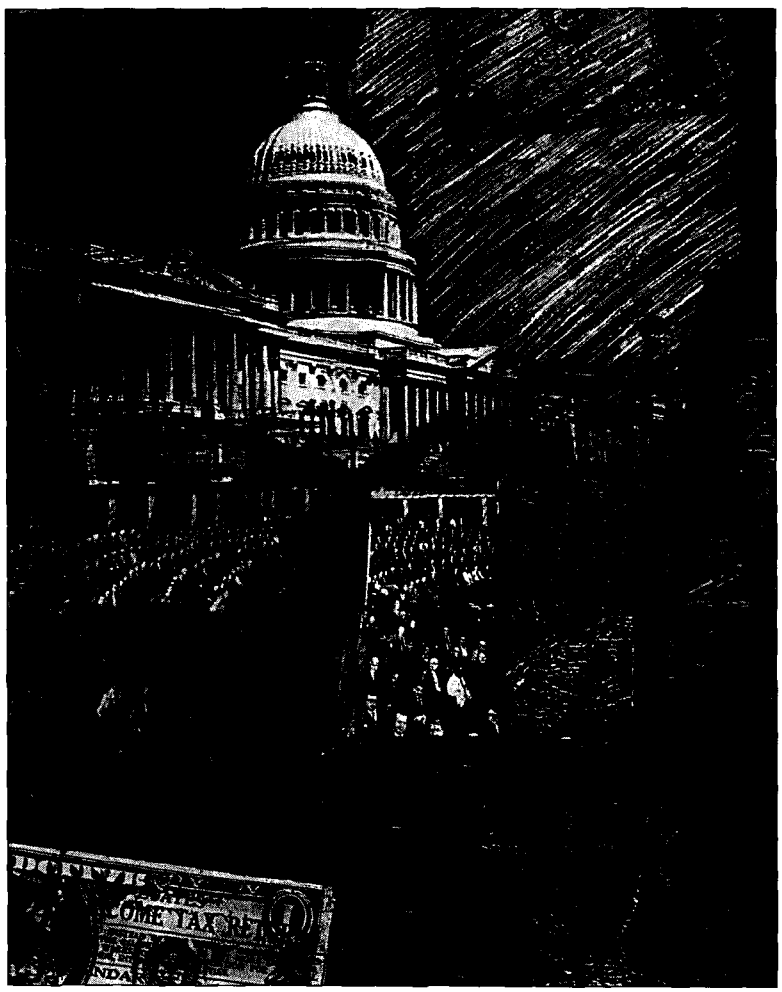


ILLUSTRATION BY TOM PRESTON FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The pattern is most visible in smaller social units, such as local school districts, where groups colonize the curriculum—sex education for liberals, values instruction for conservatives, recycling lessons for environmentalists, voluntary silent prayer for Christians. But even among the general population the same forces are at work. Fifty years ago the phrase "the elderly" denoted a demographic category; today, thanks largely to federal pension programs and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), it denotes a giant and voracious lobby. In the 1930s the government set up farm-subsidy programs, one per commodity; inevitably, lobbies sprang up to defend each program, so that today American agriculture is fundamentally a collection of interest groups. With the help of group organizers and race-based benefits, loose ethnic distinctions coalesce into hard ethnic lobbies. And so on.

Even more depressing, any attempt to fight back against the proliferating mass of subdivision is foiled by the rhetoric of standard populism and its useful stooge: the special interest. The concept of a "special interest" is at the very core of standard populism—the "them" without which there can be no "us." So widely accepted is this notion, and so useful is it in casual political speech, that most of us talk routinely about special interests without a second thought. We all feel we know a special interest when we see one, if only because it is a group of which we are not a member. Yet buried in the special interest idea is an assumption that is no longer true.

The concept of the special interest is not based on nothing. It is, rather, out of date, an increasingly empty relic of the time of machine politics and political bosses, when special interests were, quite literally, special. Simply because of who they were, they enjoyed access that was available to no one else. But the process of everyone's organizing into more and more groups can go only so far before the very idea of a special interest loses any clear meaning. At some point one must throw up one's hands and concede that the hoary dichotomy between special interests and "us" has become merely rhetoric.

According to a 1990 survey conducted for the American Society of Association Executives, seven out of ten Americans belong to at least one association, and one in four Americans belongs to four or more. Practically everyone who reads these words is a member of an interest group, probably several. Moreover, formal membership tallies omit many people whom we ordinarily think of as being represented by lobbies. For example, the powerful veterans' lobbies enroll only perhaps one-seventh of American veterans, yet the groups lobby on behalf of veterans as a class, and all 27 million veterans share in the benefits. Thus the old era of lobbying by special interests—by a well-connected, plutocratic few—is as dead now as slavery and Prohibition. We Americans have achieved the full democratization of lobbying: influence-peddling for the masses.

The appeal of standard populism today comes pre-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cisely from the phony reassurance afforded by its real message: "Other people's groups are the special interests. Less for them—more for you!" Spread that sweet manure around and the natural outgrowth is today's tendency, so evident in the Clinton style, to pander to interest groups frantically while denouncing them furiously. It is the public's style, too: sending ever more checks to the AARP and the National Rifle Association and the National Federation of Independent Business and the National Wildlife Federation and a million others, while railing against special interests. Join and join, blame and blame.

So hyperpluralism makes a hash of the usual sort of standard populist prescription, which calls for "the people" to be given more access to the system, at the expense of powerful Beltway figures who are alleged to have grown arrogant or corrupt or out of touch. Activists and reformers who think the answer to democracy's problems is more access for more of the people need to wake up. Uncontrolled access only breeds more lobbies. It is axiomatic that "the people" (whatever that now means) do not organize to seek government benefits; lobbies do. Every new door to the federal treasury is an opportunity for new groups to queue up for more goodies.

Populists resolutely refuse to confront this truth. Last year, for example, Republicans and the editors of *The Wall Street Journal* campaigned fiercely—and successfully—for new congressional rules making it easier for legislators and groups to demand that bottled-up bills be discharged from committee. The idea was to bring Congress closer to "the people" by weakening the supposedly high-handed barons who rule the Hill. But burying the Free Christmas Tree for Every American Act (or whatever) in committee—while letting members of Congress say they *would* have voted for it—was one of the few remaining ways to hold the door against hungry lobbies clamoring for gifts.

A second brand of populism, *left-populism*, is even more clueless than the standard brand, if that's possible. Many liberals believe the problem is that the wrong groups—the rich, the elites, the giant corporations, etc.—have managed to out-organize the good guys and take control of the system. One version of this model was elaborated by William Greider in his book *Who Will Tell the People*. The New Deal legacy, he writes, "rests upon an idea of interest group bargaining that has gradually been transformed into the random deal-making and permissiveness of the present. The alterations in the system are decisive and ... the ultimate effects are anti-democratic. People with limited resources, with no real representation in the higher levels of politics, are bound to lose in this environment." So elaborate is the Washington machine of lobbyists, consultants, P.R. experts, political action committees and for-hire think tanks, says Greider, that "powerful economic interests," notably corporations and private wealth, inevitably dominate.

What's appealing about this view is the truism from which it springs: the wealthy enjoy a natural advantage in lobbying, as in almost everything else. Thus many lobbies—even liberal lobbies—are dominated by the comfortable and the wealthy. Consider the case of environmental groups. Anyone who doubts they are major players in Washington today need only look at the massive 1990 Clean Air Act, a piece of legislation that business gladly would have done without. Yet these groups are hardly battalions of the disfranchised. "Readers of *Sierra*, the magazine of the Sierra Club, have household incomes twice that of the average American," notes Senior Economist Terry L. Anderson of the Political Economy Research Center. And *The Economist* notes that "in 1993 the Nature Conservancy, with $915 million in assets, drew 73 percent of its income from rich individuals." When such groups push for emissions controls or pesticide rules, they may be reflecting the priorities of people who buy BMWs and brie more than the priorities of people who buy used Chevies and hamburger. So left-populism's claim to speak for "the people" is often suspect, to say the least.

The larger problem with left-populism, however, is its refusal to see that it is feeding the very problem it decries. Left-populism was supposed to fix the wealth-buys-power problem by organizing the politically disadvantaged into groups: unions, consumer groups, rainbow coalitions and so on. But the strategy has failed. As the left (the unions, the environmentalists) has organized ever more groups, the right (the bosses, the polluters) has followed suit. The group-forming has simply spiralled. This makes a joke of the left-populist prescription, which is to form more "citizens' groups" on the Naderite model, supposedly reinvigorating representative democracy and giving voice to the weak and the silenced. Greider proposes giving people subsidies to spend on political activism: "Giving individual citizens the capacity to deploy political money would inevitably shift power from existing structures and disperse it among the ordinary millions who now feel excluded."

Inevitably, it would do no such thing. Subsidies for activism would perforce go straight into the waiting coffers of (what else?) interest groups, new and old. That just makes matters worse, for if one side organizes more groups, the other side simply redoubles its own mobilization ad infinitum. That escalating cycle is the story of the last three decades. The only winner is the lobbying class. Curiously, then, left-populism has come to serve the very lobbying elites—the Washington lawyers and lobby shops and P.R. pros and interest group execs—whom leftists ought, by rights, to loathe.

The realization that the lobbying class is, to a large extent, both entrepreneurial and in business for itself has fed the third brand of populism, *right-populism*. In the right-populist model, self-serving political careerists have hijacked government and learned to manipulate it for profit. In refreshing contrast to the other two brands of populism, however, this one is in touch with reality. Washington *is* in business

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for itself, though not only for itself. Legislators and lobbies have an interest in using the tax code to please their constituents, but they also have an interest in churning the tax code to generate campaign contributions and lobbying fees. Luckily for them, those two imperatives generally coincide: the more everyone hunts for tax breaks, the more lobbying jobs there are. Right-populism has tumbled to the fact that so-called public interest and citizens' groups are no more immune to this self-serving logic of lobbying—create conflict, reap rewards—than is any other sort of professional lobby.

Yet right-populism fails to see to the bottom of the problem. It looks into the abyss but flinches. This is not to say that term limits and other procedural fine-tunes may not help; such reforms are no doubt worth trying. But even if noodling with procedures succeeded in diluting the culture of political careerism, it would help (or hurt) mainly at the margins. No, tinkering with the process isn't the answer. What we must do is go straight at the beast itself. We must attack and weaken the lobbies—that is, the *people's* lobbies.

It sounds so simple: weaken the lobbies! Shove them aside, reclaim the government! "It's just that simple," twinkles Ross Perot. But it's not that simple. Lobbies in Washington have clout because the people who scream when "special interests" are attacked are Medicare recipients defending benefits, farmers defending price supports, small businesses defending subsidized loans, racial groups defending set-asides and so on. Inherently, challenging these groups is no one's idea of fun, which is why politicians so rarely propose to do it. The solution is to strip away lobbies' protections and let competition hammer them. In practice, that means:

Balance the federal budget. It is a hackneyed prescription, but it is the very first thing we should do to curtail the lobbies' ability to rob the future. Deficits empower lobbies by allowing them to raid the nation's scarce reserves of investment capital. Deprived of that ability, they will be forced to compete more fiercely for money, and they'll be unable to steal from the future.

Cut the lobbies' lifelines. Eliminate subsidies and programs, including tax loopholes, by the hundreds. Killing a program here or there is a loser's game; it creates a political uproar without actually making a noticeable difference. The model, rather, should be the 1986 tax reform measure, which proved that a wholesale housecleaning really is possible. Back then, tax loopholes were cleared away by the truckload. The trick was—and is—to do the job with a big package of reforms that politicians can tout back home as real change. That means ditching whole Cabinet departments and abolishing virtually all industry-specific subsidies. Then go after subsidies for the non-needy—wholesale, not retail.

Promote domestic perestroika. Lobbies live to lock benefits in and competition out, so government restraints on competition should be removed—not indiscriminately, but determinedly. President Carter's deregulation of transportation industries and interest rates, though imperfectly executed, were good examples. Air travel, trucking and rail shipping are cheaper *and* safer. The affected industries have been more turbulent, but that's exactly the point. Domestic competition shakes up interest groups that settle cozily into Washington.

Encourage foreign competition. This is most important of all. The forces that breed interest groups never abate, and so fighting them requires a constant counterforce. Foreign competition is such a counterforce. Protection invariably benefits the industries and groups with the sharpest lobbyists and the fattest political action committees; stripping away protection forces them to focus more on modernizing and less on lobbying.

No good deed, they say, goes unpunished. We sought to solve pressing social problems, so we gave government vast power to reassign resources. We also sought to look out for ourselves and bring voices to all of our many natures and needs, so we built countless new groups to seek government's resources. What we did not create was a way to control the chain reaction we set off. Swarming interest groups excited government to perpetual activism, and government activism drew new groups to Washington by the thousands. Before we knew it, society itself was turning into a collection of ravenous lobbies.

Why was this not always a problem? Because there used to be control rods containing the chain reaction. Smoke-filled rooms, they were called. On Capitol Hill or in Tammany Hall, you needed to see one of about six people to have any hope of getting what you wanted, and those six people dispensed (and conserved) favors with parsimonious finesse. Seen from today's vantage, smoke-filled rooms and political machines did a creditable job of keeping a lid on the interest group frenzy—they just didn't do it particularly fairly. That's why we opened up access to anyone who wants to organize and lobby, and opened up power to subcommittee chairs and caucus heads and even junior legislators. In doing so, we abolished the venal gatekeepers. But that was only the good news. The bad news was that we also abolished the gate.

No, we shouldn't go back to smoke-filled rooms. But the way forward is harder than it ever was before. The maladies that now afflict government are ones in which the public is wholly, enthusiastically implicated. Still, there are sprigs and shoots of encouragement all around. There was the surprisingly strong presidential bid of former Senator Paul Tsongas, which built something of a constituency for straight talk. There's the rise of a school of Democrats in Congress—among them Senator Bob Kerrey and retiring Representative Tim Penny—who are willing to drag the White House toward sterner fiscal measures. There was the Clinton-led triumph of NAFTA last year. Those developments show promise of a political movement that is counter-populist yet also popular. Maybe—is it too much to hope?—they point beyond the desert of populism. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Jokers Wild

Robin Williams was on the David Letterman show the other evening, presumably to promote his new film. Instead, Williams launched into some of his subcortical frenzies, a few of which (as usual) were very funny. Several times during the ten minutes or so, Letterman tried to get him to say something about the new film. All Williams would say was that it took place over a period of 10,000 years; then he plunged back into the vortex.

I had already seen the new film, **Being Human** (Warner Bros.), and I thought that Williams might be embarrassed about it. If so, it was understandable; so was I. Williams is a unique maniacal treasure, part competent actor, part Jonathan Winters spin-off, part social-political surgeon. But in *Being Human* he has five parts to play in different historical periods, from cave-dwelling to New Jersey, and none of them is good enough for him. He has always specialized in roles off the beaten track, as in *The Fisher King*, *Awakenings* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*, but these five roles aren't much more than costume-and-makeup jobs, not realized characters in realized playlets.

Worse embarrassment: the film was written and directed by Bill Forsyth, the gifted Scot who wrote and directed such gentle delights as *That Sinking Feeling*, *Gregory's Girl* and *Local Hero*, who then came to America and made his best film—now dear to many people I know—his adaptation of Marilynne Robinson's novel, *Housekeeping*. This same Bill Forsyth, who has seemed so quietly scornful of woolliness and cliché, is less discriminating here.

His screenplay includes a scene in prehistory, shot on the bleakly beautiful Scottish coast, in which raiders abduct a cave-dweller's wife and two children (and, against likelihood, spare his life); a Roman Empire scene in which a slave is meant to accompany his master in a suicide pact but flees with another slave, a black woman (to where? Greenwich Village?); a medieval European scene in which a traveler is befriended by a lovely young woman who takes him to an idyllic rural dwelling (straight out of any schoolboy's fantasy); a Renaissance episode about Portuguese nobles shipwrecked on the African coast, in which the Williams character is hated by a young woman (a hatred that is never explained); and a closing episode, today in and around New York, which is yet another tale of a divorced father trying to get close to his children.

These episodes are supposedly connected by a thread of common humanity, the longing for home and happiness. What a facile theme. It could connect *The Odyssey* and *A Christmas Carol*. And it's bound to turn out soppy unless it's handled with the wit and reticence that Forsyth used to show. This script is just a set of greeting cards; none of them—except the last—evokes even glib emotion.

Williams doesn't strive much for variety in his performances and is patently at ease only in the modern bit. Two of the supporting people are more touching. The young medieval woman is played tenderly by Anna Galiena, who speaks (we're told) Friulano, an ancient forerunner of present-day Italian. And 13-year-old Helen Miller gives freshness to the familiar role of the knowing modern adolescent who can put her fumbling father at ease.

I wish that she or someone had been able to put Forsyth at ease as director. His work here is as routine and flavorless as his past work was delicate and savory.

The history of the twentieth-century assault on Good Taste will surely be written one day, and surely Pedro Almodóvar will figure in it. That history will be analogous to another cultural campaign, the move to blur distinctions between high art and popular art. (Terms that the blurrers use.) Almodóvar, sizzlingly talented, makes films that are polished and gleaming but are, basically, something like soft-core porno comic strips. His chief motive is his belief that Mrs. Grundy is a hypocritical dolt and deserves to have her skirts blown up around her head. His films mock smug conventions, and they do it with sophisticated razzberries.

Often in his still-brief career he has been like a marauding shark, ripping social order and making us smile while he does it. Now he marauds further and wants us to keep smiling. In **Kika** (October Films), which is set in Madrid, a leading character is a handsome satyriast who is below mental par. His sister, a housemaid, tells us that, to keep him from violating the whole neighborhood, she occasionally gives him sex to cool

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Four Weddings and a Funeral. *A bright British comedy about ... four weddings and a funeral. Hugh Grant gambols through, accompanied by Andie MacDowell. (Reviewed 4/4/94)* **Sunday's Children.** *Ingmar Bergman's autobiographical screenplay directed by his son, Daniel. The boy Ingmar and the man are juxtaposed with his clergyman father. More somber than it seems, though it looks lovely. (5/16/94)* **A Tale of Winter.** *Again Eric Rohmer puts love under a sort of Gallic microscope, rewardingly. A young woman bears the burden of early love in her later affairs. (5/9/94)* **Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould.** *François Girard has found a unique, prismatic way to give us fascinating glimpses of Gould's strengths and quirks. (4/25/94)* **—SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him down. This brother, hiding in the apartment where she works because the police are after him, finds the mistress of the house asleep in her slip, inserts orange sections in her vagina, then sniffs and eats them; then, armed, he rapes her. This wakes her—and she objects, though not in terror. While the rape is going on—and on (he is indefatigable)—his sister and others come into the bedroom and ask him to desist, but he continues, while the victim protests and the sister pleads. At last he withdraws, goes out on the terrace and masturbates. A woman in the street below looks up and gets a drop of semen on her cheek.

I don't think I distort by isolating these matters, as long as I emphasize that a spirit of burlesque pervades the film. (Burlesque rape? Yes, says Almodóvar.) The gaudy decor and the revue-sketch acting support this mood. But *Kika* on the whole shows a weakness in Almodóvar. Often he is irreverent about stupidities in society, but sometimes he is merely irreverent. It's as though he means us to say, "If we want his brilliant excesses, we just have to accept his worrisome ones."

Kika, the lady of the house, played with tired drive by Verónica Forqué, is hardly a prude; she lives with a lingerie photographer and occasionally beds her lover's stepfather, who lives upstairs. That stepfather is played by Peter Coyote, who studded his way through *Outrageous Fortune* with Bette Midler and talked dirty all through Polanski's *Bitter Moon*. Here he continues on his glandular way, dubbed (I suppose) in Spanish. The housemaid is an Almodóvar familiar, the woman who looks like a Picasso model, Rossy de Palma. Her phallocrat brother is Santiago Lajusticia. Victoria Abril, another Almodóvar pet, plays the host of a T.V. program called "Today's Worst," which features daily disasters. She wears a spaceship costume, bust-enhancing, with a camcorder on top of her helmet. It's a better role than her American debut in *Jimmy Hollywood*, but it doesn't make the most of this spirited comedienne.

I haven't attempted to sketch much of the story. Let's just say that it glides along from blast to attempted blast and that sometimes it strains. I hope this strain doesn't mean that Almodóvar is running dry, that he doesn't still have a lot of first-class stingers to jab us with. •

Women and men in the mirror of feminist theory.

The Gender Question

BY ALAN WOLFE

I.

Of all the ways that one group has systematically mistreated another, none is more deeply rooted than the way men have subordinated women. All other discriminations pale by contrast. They, the other discriminations, are relatively recent, requiring the creation of racial, national or religious difference before they came into being; think of how many years had to pass before Serbs could hate Croats. But gender difference is as old as human complexity. Even if one accepts the arguments summarized by Judith Lorber that a rough gender equality prevailed during the Paleolithic and Neolithic eras, one is still talking about a system that has been in existence since the division of labor was invented. Gender difference originated when we began to imagine ourselves as human. It developed as we did; and it extended its reach to the period we call modern.

Despite a history as old as ourselves, we are living through a revolution in gender roles that may turn out to be one of the most significant transformations in human behavior since our history began. This revolution has not created full equality between men and women. Women, when they work, earn less than men. They are still underrepresented in many professions. They remain at the mercy of men's capacity and willingness to use force. Childbearing and child-raising are still their primary responsibility. They are more likely to live in poverty. The history of their societies is not necessarily their history. And yet, compared to a recent period when

ALAN WOLFE is University Professor and professor of sociology at Boston University. He is the author most recently of *The Human Difference: Animals, Computers and the Necessity of Social Science* (University of California Press).

WoRD LoVerS aDoRE VEX™
—the world's finest word game. Vermont-made, wooden gameboard and letter tiles enclosed in a deluxe wooden carrying case. Fun...challenging... addictive! **The perfect gift!**
$49.95. ☎ 1-800-789-GAME
VEX is a trademark of Wood-on-Brook Games

• THE PUBLIC INTEREST •
a quarterly journal of politics and public policy, is looking for an assistant editor. Applicants should send a resume and writing sample to:
The Public Interest, 1112 16th St. NW, Suite 530, Washington, D.C. 20036

HOME STUDY COURSE
in economics. A 10-lesson study that will throw light on today's baffling problems. Tuition free—small charge for materials.
Write Henry George Institute, 121 E. 30th Street, New York, NY 10016

GOOD VIBRATIONS
Friendly, informative catalogs of sex toys, books & videos. $4, applied toward first order.
1210 Valencia #NR, San Francisco, CA 94130

$14 INCL S&H
Take Back the News!

Mugs $10
B'stickers $2
S, M, L, XL. Check/MO to J.W. PRETTYMAN. 3208 W. Lake St. #120-N, Mpls. MN 55416. Insist on newsworthy news. Write to your local and national editors & TV news directors.

America's biggest selection of
Bargain Books
- Save up to 80% or more on recent overstocks, remainders, imports from all major publishers. Books once priced at $20, $30, $40—now only $2.95, $3.95, $4.95.
- Choose from thousands of titles including hundreds of new arrivals each month!
- Books for every interest: **Politics**, Literature, History, Science, Biography, Fiction, Nature, Travel—over 40 subject areas.

Free Catalog
HAMILTON
Box 15-434, Falls Village, CT 06031

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

women were deprived of property and the right to vote, disadvantaged in inheritance, subject to the tyranny of constant pregnancy and denigrated in culture, their gains have been considerable.

Because men's power over women is both deeply rooted and increasingly challenged, a stocktaking of theoretical efforts to understand gender relations is very much in order. American education, from elementary school to graduate school, has become extremely sensitive to the issue of gender. Women's studies courses and departments have proliferated. There have been feminist revolutions in just about every academic discipline. The intellectual activity has been furious. It is worth asking what results have been produced.

Each of these writers seeks the key to understanding gender oppression in different ways. For Sandra Lipsitz Bem, a psychologist, gender is primarily a lens. The ways in which institutions, cultures and people deal with gender difference are filtered through three invisible assumptions, which she hopes to make visible: "androcentrism," or the belief that male ideals are universals to which women should conform; "polarization," or the belief that men and women are so different that all aspects of society should be organized on different bases; and "essentialism," or the belief that these differences are rooted in anatomy or genetic factors. The bulk of Bem's book is devoted to showing why all three lenses are myopic, though she realizes from the start that some criticisms of gender polarization are androcentric and that some forms of feminism are gender polarizing.

In some prehistoric time, according to Bem, biology may have played a role in originating gender difference, but that time is long past. To be sure, women are more likely to be care-givers, especially to infants, but this is due to centuries of socialization, not to the particularities of the female body. Any credible explanation of gender difference must rely on the contribution that culture makes to biology. Bem's account of androcentric ideas is somewhat different; she does not try to disprove them, but rather to show how common they have been in Western culture. In the best part of her book she traces these ideas through the Bible, Aristotle's philosophy, Freud's writings and U.S. Supreme Court decisions. Gender polarization is a problematic notion, finally, because male and female are not distinct categories.

Or so, Bem claims, her early experimental research proves. In the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), respondents were asked to rank on a seven-point scale the degree to which a number of attributes—assertive, tender, understanding, independent—applied to them. By scoring the results in accord with conventional understandings of gender difference, subjects could then be ranked according to masculinity or femininity. The objective of the BSRI, in today's terms, was to "deconstruct" the concepts of male and female by demonstrating how many people were neither—or, with later refinements, both. Scientific psychology got gender wrong, Bem argued, by assuming the fixity of the categories. The BSRI implied, moreover, important therapeutic consequences: "Whereas it had been assumed that mental health required men to be masculine and women to be feminine, now it was being suggested not only that everyone could be both masculine and feminine but, even more important, that standards of mental health should be genderless." From this and other experiments, Bem concluded that gender was neither inherent in human personality nor an aspect of the self; it was something that we internalize as children and make our cognitive property, even if we never recognize what we are doing. The idea behind the BSRI was to strip gender of its attributed significance, a laudable desire, perhaps, but one that would soon come into sharp conflict with a trend among feminists to increase the significance associated with gender.

The Lenses of Gender: Transforming the Debate on Sexual Inequality
by Sandra Lipsitz Bem
(Yale University Press, 256 pp., $30)

The Sexual Metaphor
by Helen Haste
(Harvard University Press, 302 pp., $24.95)

Paradoxes of Gender
by Judith Lorber
(Yale University Press, 448 pp., $30)

Helen Haste is also a psychologist, one who has made important contributions to the study of how moral personalities are made. Her book, like Bem's, goes beyond her particular discipline to larger reflections on how a gendered world came to be. Gender, for Haste, is not a lens but a metaphor. Gender oppression is so pervasive, and reproduces itself so effortlessly, because it has been incorporated into our language and, in that way, into our thought. Each of us is a "lay theorist"; we make sense out of the world by thinking and acting on the basis of theories about how the world works. When we want to move between what we know and what we do not, we find metaphors seductively waiting to take us across the bridge into new realms of experience.

Consider, Haste invites us, the metaphor of Man the Hunter. Repeated enough times and in enough ways, the notion that at one time men hunted while women cooked what they caught becomes, not a story about reality, but reality itself. The power of this metaphor, or any other metaphor, lies in its duality. In Western culture, Haste argues, we divide things into themselves and their opposite; hence we understand woman not as something in her own right, but as the opposite of man. Dualistic metaphors protect us from the darkest fears, such as the fear of losing our reason, being absorbed in the other or raging out of control. To challenge the dichotomy between male and female, therefore, is to question everything; in searching for more authentic metaphors, feminists must take on reason itself.

Haste calls for a "cultural feminism" that goes well beyond the rationalistic prognosis of liberal and socialist versions, which seek only to replace one kind of order with another. Cultural feminism subverts gender categories by holding them up to ridicule (as, we are told once more, Madonna does in her every performance). It asks women to fight not only for equality of wages or access to power, but also for an *anti-logos*, a determined effort at "deconstructing and changing the fundamental principles on which we base lay social theory and folk modes of gender." Even Bem's work is insufficient for this task, for although it "broke the metaphor of duality and polarity," it nonetheless "took for granted traditional descriptions of masculine and feminine traits" and "was closer to rationalist reconstruction than to finding new authenticity." A substantial portion of Haste's book is devoted to a friendly critique of other feminisms for not digging deeply enough into culture, a realm that, in contrast to the economy or the polity, inevitably reaches the hearts of darkness upon which sexuality touches. The problem with rape or sexual harassment, for example, is not just that men use force to dominate women; both also express a symbolic drama touching on dualities—virtue / dishonor, yes / no, day / night—that themselves reinforce gender oppression.

Judith Lorber's work is the most ambitious of these recent efforts to theorize about gender. Lorber, a sociologist, argues that gender is a status assigned to individuals and a way of organizing social institutions. All aspects of society take on gendered properties, not only the division of labor, but also kinship, sexual scripts, personalities, forms of social control, ideologies, imagery, iden-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tity, beliefs and techniques of symbolic display.

To demonstrate the ubiquity of gender, Lorber takes the reader on a tour of human culture since its invention. Her intent is to show that, historically speaking, there were alternatives to gender inequality, in the sense that women's status was relatively high in hunter-gatherer and horticultural societies, although even back then, people were still divided by sex into different tasks. The "major shift" took place around 5,000 years after the discovery of agriculture, when more intensive methods of farming began to be implemented. Once plows came into being and animals were domesticated by agricultural use, men's work was no longer compatible with child-rearing. Out of the inequalities that began to emerge, property relations and patriarchy eventually developed.

We who are modern, Lorber continues, live in the shadow of the gender relations that were constructed with, and after, the rise of modern agriculture. Lorber's book is an encyclopedia of misery, a compendium of every conceivable way in which contemporary industrial society tries to assign women to second-class status. Reviewing a wide range of secondary sources and summarizing experiences from all over the world, Lorber finds gender discrimination in every nook and cranny of modern society, from the relative worth of boys and girls, to family structure, to the unequal rewards for domestic labor, to the glass ceiling and, finally, to the structure of politics itself. The situation facing modern women could not be grimmer:

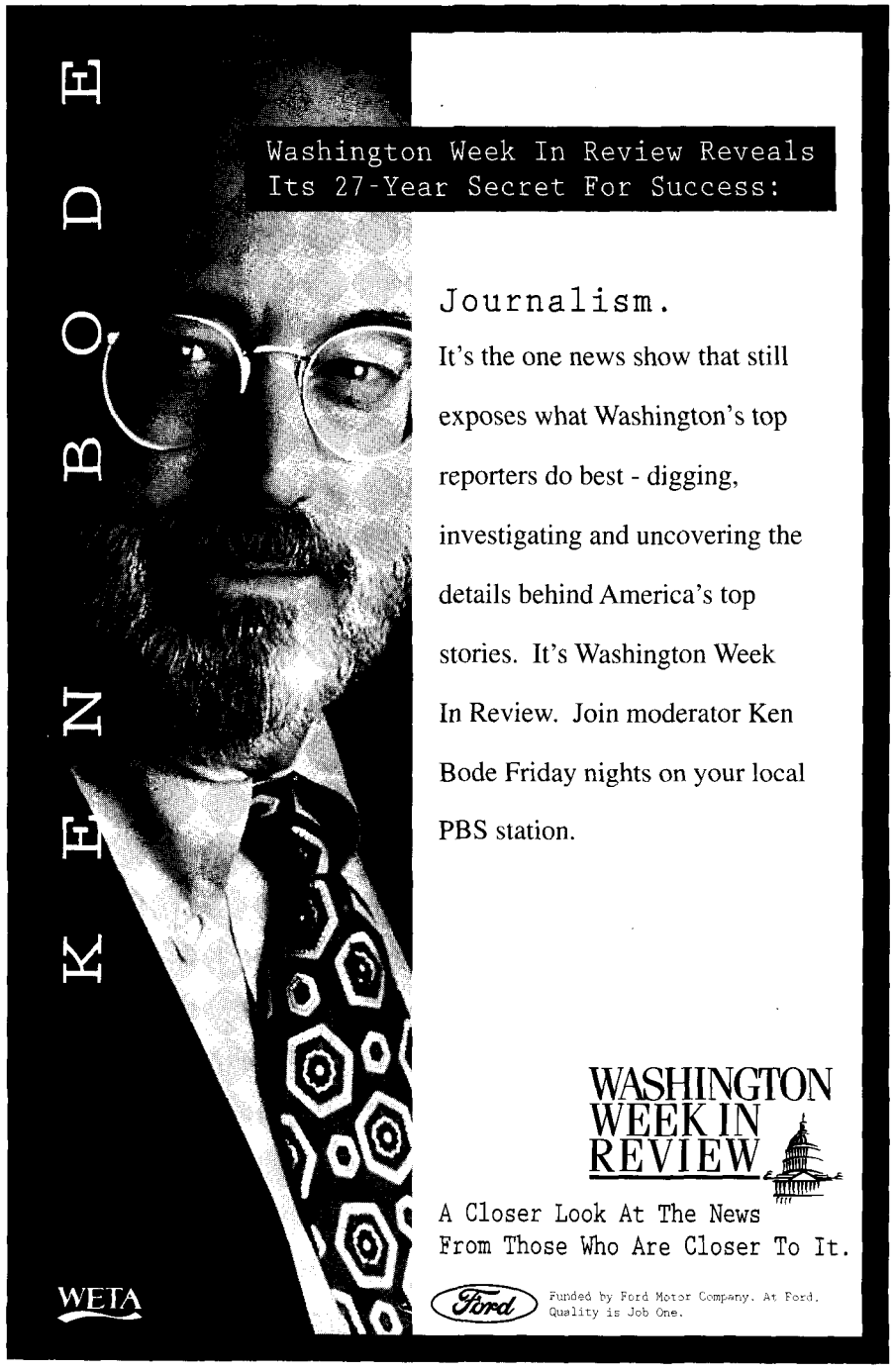
> Gender statuses today are inherently unequal, and the whole point of gendering is to produce gender inequality. Subordination of women is an intrinsic part of the modern social order.... The subordination of women persists because it produces a group that can be exploited as workers, sexual partners, childbearers and emotional nurturers in the marketplace and in the household.

II.

Knowledge about society does not come easy. Feminists are not the first to have proclaimed an intellectual revolution, only to discover that, when all the euphoria fades, we know about as much (or as little) about the social world as we did before the revolution took place. Marxism, positivism, behavioralism, phenomenology: philosophy and social theory are littered with the corpses of totalizing ideas. Given these difficulties, it is not necessarily a criticism of feminist theory to suggest that we do not fully understand what gender is or how it works.

Of all the things we do not know, the most significant is the most foundational: we do not know whether women and men are essentially different or fundamentally the same. Feminists have long been divided, in Bem's terms, into minimizers and maximizers of the male-female difference. The question of whether women and men belong in the same or different categories seems so crucial to every other question raised by considerations of gender that a definitive answer would appear to be unavoidable. Yet answering the question poses risks. If men and women are basically the same, feminist theory ought to seek such goals as equality and universality, even if feminism, in doing so, must refrain from attacking men and celebrating women. If they are different, feminist theory can point with pride to women's special contributions and characteristics, but only by undermining commitments to full equality.

Bem has thought hard about this dilemma, which may be why she has such difficulty providing an unambiguous resolution. As the feminist temper shifted in the 1970s away from sameness and toward difference, so did Bem. Having invested a considerable amount of intellectual energy in the notion that gender polarization is problematic, Bem


KEN BODE
Washington Week In Review Reveals
Its 27-Year Secret For Success:
Journalism.
It's the one news show that still exposes what Washington's top reporters do best - digging, investigating and uncovering the details behind America's top stories. It's Washington Week In Review. Join moderator Ken Bode Friday nights on your local PBS station.
WASHINGTON WEEK IN REVIEW
A Closer Look At The News From Those Who Are Closer To It.
WETA
Ford
Funded by Ford Motor Company. At Ford, Quality is Job One.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knows that she cannot accept a celebration of feminist difference; but she cannot bring herself to engage in serious criticism of difference-maximizers who stress the positive sides of women's experience. For one thing, celebrations of difference contribute to the breakdown of one of her three lenses: androcentrism. In addition, Bem argues, we might understand difference theories not as empirical descriptions of actual differences, but as poetic expressions of self-awareness. In short, Bem does finally take a stand: she is a difference-minimizer. But she takes it in such a tentative way that the reader is left wondering whether the lenses she characterizes as inevitably myopic aren't fairly accurate reflections of reality after all.

Consider Bem's discussion of androgyny. Her initial BSRI was devoted to proving how, despite our faith in conventional sex roles, the categories of male and female are not mutually exclusive. Androgyny was an attractive concept when the feminist movement was young; but, denying female difference as it did, it soon lost its appeal. Bem recognizes the criticisms: not only does androgyny focus on individuals rather than social structure, it "reproduces—and thereby reifies—the very gender polarization it seeks to undercut." Having pointed out the theoretical and practical limits to androgyny, however, she is still sympathetic to her earlier endorsement of it: "I do not find any of the critiques so devastating as to justify the exclusion of *androgyny* from the feminist lexicon." Bem believes that there is no such thing as male and female *and* that being female is a special experience.

Despite her demonstration that gender polarization was an artificial category imposed on people by an unsatisfying psychology, Bem was caught up in the feminist currents that swirled around her, and began to search for an explanation of gender difference that would not be hostile to male-female difference. In the late 1970s she argued for what she called "gender-schematicity." In these experiments she gave subjects a number of words and asked them to repeat the words in any order they chose. Some of the words had male connotations and some female; some of them were male names and some female; others had no gender associations. If people walk around with cognitive schemas in their minds linking otherwise diverse phenomena, she reasoned, there would be patterns in the order in which they recalled names. And so there were; conventionally gendered people, for example, lumped "feminine" words together such as butterfly and bikini. They were also quicker to associate gender-specific terms with themselves. If at one time people's minds were blank slates upon which society wrote a gender script emphasizing differences between men and women, now the mind was hard-wired (by culture, not biology) to be either male or female.

In her early work Bem argued that gender was arbitrary. In her later work she began to argue that it was necessary. Although experimental psychology prides itself on being a science—on its ability to demonstrate truths independent of the point of view of the scientist—Bem was using scientific technique to argue for truths that seemed to cancel each other out. And Bem's inability to make up her mind about male and female difference, as problematic as it may be for theory, is even more problematic for a theory about human personalities.

Psychology is a special social science in one important way: divided into experimental and clinical branches, it not only seeks to understand the mind, but also to improve it. Having reached the conclusion, based on her early research, that mental health is significantly enhanced if people are genderless, one can only wonder what Bem thought about mental health as she became more sympathetic to feminist gender polarization. The picture that one gets of gender-troubled children twisting in the winds of psychological fashion—today encouraged to break out of conventional gender roles, tomorrow urged to get into line with them—does not give a very positive impression of the state of academic psychology. As Bem's work illustrates, when all is said and done—when the experiments are carried out, the reflections upon them reformulated and the mental health recommendations proposed—we still do not know whether men and women are variations of a common category or completely different categories.

Similar problems of deciding what we know and what we do not know arise from feminist efforts to claim that gender is a "socially constructed" phenomenon. All these writers, and indeed the majority of feminist theorists, are social constructionists. The dividing line in feminist theory is not between social construction and some other way of understanding gender, but between different understandings of how much of the world is constructed socially. One point of view holds that sex is biological and gender is cultural. This notion has been challenged by a more radical position, usually identified with lesbian theorists, who argue that sex itself is a social construction. Lorber endorses this reading. Bem, although marginally more sympathetic to biological differences between men and women than Lorber, writes that biological differences "will depend, *in every single instance*, on the situational context in which men and women lead their lives" (my italics). In these formulations, the world is polymorphous until human beings come into it and write their social practices and ideas upon it.

But these writers who accept a radical interpretation of social constructionism are unwilling to confront its theoretical implications. For there is a tension between the notion that something is constructed and the notion that it is permanent. The ease with which these writers go from the assertion that gender is arbitrary to the notion that gender is deeply entrenched gives one pause, for the shift from one argument to the other seems to have more to do with politics than with theory, despite an oft-repeated tenet of feminism that theory and politics are the same thing.

When they talk politically, Bem and Lorber find in social constructionism a way of proclaiming the possibility of social change. Lorber's aim "is to challenge the validity, permanence and necessity of gender." She writes that "human beings have constructed and used gender—human beings can deconstruct and stop using gender." Bem emphasizes her "own commitment to eradicating [gender] from both the culture and the psyche." In this political voice, gender, because socially constructed, is capable of being dismantled.

But if gender is a transitory thing politically, it cannot be quite as deeply etched into the history, the institutions, the practices and the psyches of our society as Bem and Lorber, in their theoretical voices, proclaim. Culture transforms itself into gender difference, according to Bem, by utilizing "the institutional preprogramming of the individual's daily experience into the default options, or the historically precut 'grooves,' for that particular time and place...." This psychology is one that imagines human minds as hard drives that receive software instructions from the culture. We are as capable of thinking for ourselves as our P.C.s are to reject WordPerfect in favor of Nota Bene. Psychology is the correlative science of feminism, or any other form of "identity" politics, just as economics was of classical liberalism or sociology was of welfare-state liberalism, so long as one is determined to show that individuals are victimized by the structures of power in which they find themselves helplessly enmeshed.

By locating the cause of gender dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crimination within the individual, psychology gives the problem a radical edge. It is no longer a matter of "false consciousness," of digging beneath layers of rationalization to find real interests. It is rather that people themselves have come to live within their gender roles. The ultimate carrier of oppression is the psyche of the oppressed. The individual, in Bem's view, is "a deeply implicated—if unwitting—collaborator in the social reproduction of male power." The stoic, Kantian self, guarding its autonomy against passion and prejudice, becomes "a constructed self," composed of "a gendered personality, a gendered body, an androcentric heterosexuality and the abhorrence of homosexuality." If this is the case, one can only wonder how human beings who have no sense of an autonomous self can find the internal resources to challenge gender and render its oppressive powers irrelevant.

The same intellectual fatalism holds for Lorber, in sociological rather than psychological form. Because gender reproduces the culture, gender is necessary. "Once gender is ascribed," she writes, "the social order constructs and holds individuals to strongly gendered norms and expectations." Gender fulfills such important social functions that it is futile to challenge its overwhelming power: "social policies that ignore this structure of gender inequality and assume that remedies can take place on the individual level are doomed to failure...." Just as Bem relies on an outdated cognitive psychology that ignores the ability of human minds to attribute meaning to the world around them, Lorber relies on an outdated functional sociology that assumes that all existing institutions reproduce social relations without people being able to exercise any power over their fate by themselves. Feminist theory, which is politically progressive, is intellectually regressive. In trying to advance the situation of women, it relies on the very kinds of determinist social theories against which ideas about "the social construction of reality" were originally developed.

III.

Gender, socially constructed on the one hand, is opaque to individuals on the other. Gender empowers, and gender disempowers. It should not be surprising, consequently, that many feminist theorists believe that gender never changes, but that gender also will wither away. All of these authors proudly sketch an outline of a utopia. Having argued that gender in contemporary America is everywhere, they turn and argue that we may create a world in which gender need not be anywhere.

Haste's utopian fantasies are in some ways the most justifiable. Since her entire book is an attack on reason, why not fantasize? Indeed, Haste seems to like fantasists more than feminists; she has kind words for two bêtes noires of contemporary feminism, Camille Paglia and Robert Bly, because both of them celebrate mythic figures (and believe that they themselves belong in the pantheon). Haste's cure for the dualistic thinking that oppresses women is to offer them mythology. She likes ancient myths and woolly-eyed ecological speculation, since they "are self-consciously challenging the dominant metaphors of the culture." In a passage that ought to make a difference-minimizer such as Bem cringe, Haste writes: "When the women at Greenham Common weave webs on the wire, or use flowers and toys as symbols of protest, they are affirming feminine symbols to challenge the masculine hierarchy expressed in the power metaphors of war, but they are also offering an alternative way of looking at the world."

Bem, however, has a utopia of her own to offer, even if it is less colorful than Haste's. She envisions a world in which

> the totality of human experience would no longer be divided into cultural categories on the basis of gender, so people of different sexes would no longer be culturally

50 Years of Excellence in Defense Analysis

NEW CHALLENGES FOR DEFENSE PLANNING: Rethinking How Much is Enough

Paul Davis, editor

RAND defense analysts were thinking seriously about dramatic shifts in international security relationships and defense needs in the years leading to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Because the threat of catastrophic war has subsided, the U.S. can reduce defense spending in favor of domestic economic growth. But how far should the cuts go? And what are U.S. defense needs for the years ahead?

New Challenges for Defense Planning will be of interest to readers seeking to understand the challenges and choices confronting defense planners as we approach the 21st century.

ISBN 0-8330-15273, 700 pp., $35.00 (HC), $20.00 (P)

A LEAGUE OF AIRMEN: U.S. Air Power in the Gulf War

James A. Winnefeld, Preston Niblack, and Dana J. Johnson

Watching the war against Iraq, the world saw an impressive demonstration of modern air power at work. To its advocates, the lesson was obvious. Others argue that the accomplishments of air power in the war offered no meaningful lessons for the future. In this book, the authors challenge some widely held beliefs about the strategic air campaign in the Persian Gulf War. *A League of Airmen* is an important contribution to the study of modern air power and is essential reading for those interested in the continuing air power debate.

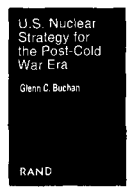
ISBN 0-8330-1503, 400 pp., $30.00 (HC), $15.00 (P)

COMMITMENT TO PURPOSE: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War

Richard L. Kugler

Now that the collapse of communism has brought the Cold War to an end, the time has come to review the history of this 40-year conflict. The book's central arguments offer some fresh and controversial perspectives that shed a more favorable light on NATO than is common in the public media. Intellectually stimulating, this book should interest anyone whose curiosity in modern European affairs has been aroused by the tumultuous events since 1989.

ISBN 0-8330-1385-8, 564 pp., $30.00 (P)



U.S. NUCLEAR STRATEGY FOR THE POST-COLD WAR

Glenn C. Buchan

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact mandates fundamentally rethinking the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. military and foreign policy. Author Glenn Buchan begins the book with a discussion of U.S. foreign policy objectives and how nuclear weapons are likely to fit in. He then focuses on the various "nuclear futures" that could evolve and how the U.S. ought to operate and employ nuclear forces in the future.

ISBN 0-8330-1521-1 83 pp., $15.00

To order these books or to receive a catalog of defense-related studies call

RAND

1700 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138, (310) 451-7002
2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037-1270, (202) 296-5000, ext. 5333

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

identified with different clothes, different social roles, different personalities or different sexual and affectional partners any more than people with different-colored eyes or different-sized feet are now.

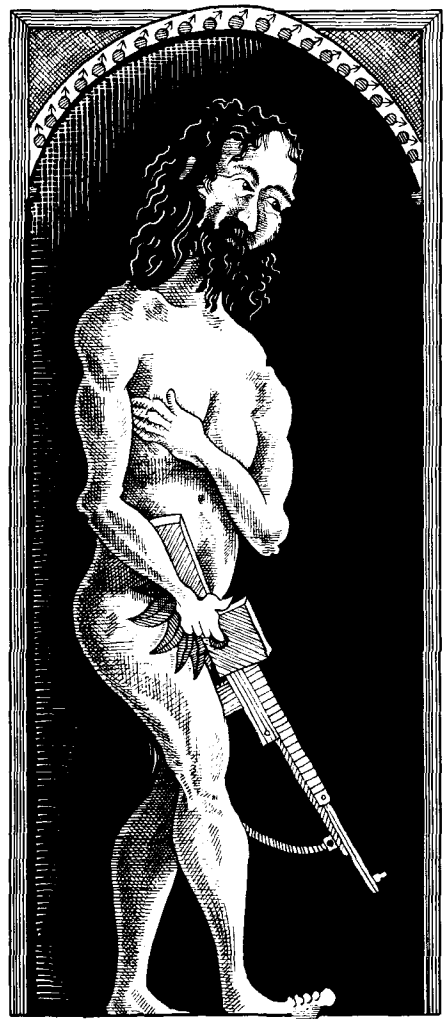
Haste's utopia smashes dualities by transforming them into multiplicities; Bem's utopia smashes dualities by transforming them into singularities. In Bem's utopia genderlessness finally wins out over gender difference; we will all be one. But it is a matter of individual taste whether a genderless world is attractive; there are people, maybe even some women, for whom masculine and feminine are categories of identity, not of oppression. And there can be little question that a world without gender markings, even if more egalitarian, would also be sociologically impoverished. It would strip from human beings their capacities to judge others by the signals that people like to transmit about their identities.

The most surprising of these utopian visions is Lorber's. Of all these books, hers is the most relentlessly down-to-earth in its single-minded insistence that gender rules everything; and, true to form, Lorber brings utopia closer to the world we know. And yet, precisely for this reason, she offers the most nightmarish utopia of all:

> In a world of scrupulous gender equality, equal numbers of girls and boys would be educated and trained for the liberal arts and for the sciences, for clerical and manual labor and for all the professions. Among those with equal credentials, women and men would be hired in an alternating fashion for the same type of jobs—or only men would be hired to do women's types of jobs and only women would be hired to do men's types of jobs until half of every workplace was made up of men and half, women.

It would take rather an active government to make society achieve such results, but we could ensure that elected officials were also gender-neutral by insisting that two men run against each other followed by two women, so that elected positions would be evenly split. Art museums would ensure that half of all paintings were done by women; book publishers would be required to publish an equal number of books by each gender. Sports, pornography—Lorber has thought of it all. Give Lorber this much: she is relentless in her pursuit of gender inequality, determined to see it eradicated in every way.

It may well be the utopian urge in their writing that leads these authors to celebrate any unconventional sexual or gender category. Gender nonconformists—"gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals, transvestites and 'gender-disordered' children"—fascinate Bem, for they challenge the gender polarization of our culture. Similarly, Haste understands homosexuality as undermining the man-woman dualism that is central to our culture. Lorber, in her encyclopedic way, lists five sexes on the basis of genitalia; three sexual orientations based on object choice; five gender displays; six types of emotional bonds; ten to fourteen kinds of sexual identifications; and an uncountable number of sexual practices.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Feminist theory prefers the anthropological to the sociological; the taste for the strange is far more powerful than an appreciation of the familiar. But if one has to travel to life at the margins in order to find the truth about gender, then life at the center, while not particularly exotic, is also not particularly problematic. The fact that there may be many genders at the extreme reinforces the point that there are only two in the quotidian. Gender exotica serves as one more triumph of romanticism over realism in feminist theory. The unknown out there is always preferable to the known closer to home, as if the truth of the conventional is too uncomfortable to deserve close attention.

Nor is it clear that the exotic boldly exposes the artificiality of the conventional. For these writers, gender-benders are performing a useful service for feminism by demonstrating the artificiality of gender categories; but, let us recall, there is also within feminism a strong preference for gender categories. Just as individuals of multiracial background may object to affirmative action on the grounds that it perpetuates categories of black and white that do not apply to them, cross-dressers and transvestites can be as subversive of female difference as they are of female stereotyping. Bem, Lorber and Haste all are aware that lesbians can sometimes take masculine identity more seriously than many men, just as male homosexuals can do the same with female identity. And male homosexuals are men: there is no reason why their interests will always be the same as those of heterosexual white women. Gender-bending reinforces and challenges gender stereotypes, but in both cases, there is no clear link with a feminist agenda.

Finally, this insistence that the nonconventional roles tell us more about the truth of gender than the conventional ones undermines the autobiographical voice that is a defining feature of a good deal of feminist scholarship. Typical is Bem, who announces in her preface that although she has lived monogamously with one man for twenty-seven years, she does not consider herself heterosexual. (Nor, it comes as no surprise, does she consider herself lesbian or bisexual.) By celebrating the nonconventional, it is as if these writers, for all the personal tone, find their actual circumstances—their heterosexuality, their careers, their bookishness—prosaic. Bem is the only one who knows that this is treacherous ground, for having praised the unconventional, she goes on to praise

> feminists, both male and female, who actively oppose the gender scripts of the culture, and even the relatively traditional women and men who become gender nonconformists merely by reversing some critical aspect of the male or female script—by choosing, if they are women, to sacrifice marriage and children for an ambitious full-time career, and by choosing, if they are men, to do the reverse.

Despite their fascination with exotic genders, these authors are not talking about polymorphousness; their real

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

desire is not to want sexuality spread around, but rather to have sexuality abolished. "Confronting male sexual power," Haste writes, "also means the right to refuse to be defined indiscriminately as a sexual being." In a perfectly gender-neutral world, Lorber hopes, we might lose our humanity, transforming ourselves into cyborgs who move back and forth from the human to the technological with ease. And Bem wants us to

> view our sex as so completely given by nature, so capable of exerting its influence automatically, and so limited in its sphere of influence to those domains where it really does matter biologically, that it could be safely tucked away in the backs of our minds and left to its own devices. In other words, biological sex would no longer be at the core of individual identity and sexuality.

Gender—and, in Bem's formulation, sex—is not to be bent, it is to be broken. If both gender and sex are abolished, the problem of deciding between minimizers and maximizers of male-female difference is overcome. Feminism triumphs by eliminating the feminine.

The feminist taste for utopia suggests that dualistic thinking, contrary to Haste, is not a monopoly of masculine reason. All these writers are dualistic in the sense that they make a sharp distinction between this world and some other. But whereas a comparison to the historical past might lead to the conclusion that the situation of women, still unequal, has nonetheless improved, a comparison to an unknown future allows any conclusion one wishes, irrespective of any real-world checkpoint. The attraction of utopia for science fiction writers is understandable; most feminists admire Ursula Le Guin, even as they are uncomfortable with the more sharp-edged dystopias of Margaret Atwood. For social scientists, however, the construction of utopia is self-defeating. It announces a resignation from any effort to come to an understanding of the world in which, for better or worse, we happen to live. For these writers, if in varying degrees, utopian speculations serve as a substitute for their missing social science. Each of the dual worlds they create lacks the texture of real life, as if our only choices are complete oppression or complete freedom.

"It is only now, in the 1990s, that a full-fledged analysis of gender as wholly constructed, symbolically loaded and ideologically enforced is taking place in American feminism," Lorber writes. She is, I believe, overly optimistic.

In the social sciences, feminists have brought women into a history from which they were once excluded. Feminist historiography is often path-breaking and fascinating; and it has significantly improved our understanding of politics, especially of the welfare state. The way in which sociology once treated the family is scandalous, a scandal that is no longer the case due to the work of feminist social scientists. Feminist scholarship, in short, is vigorous and ambitious and fundamental.

Feminist theory is another matter. It may be the case that the failure of recent

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

efforts to develop a general theory of gender is due to the problems facing all theories in the social sciences, where it is difficult to find a convincing theory of anything. But there is an additional problem. Before feminism can create a theory that helps us make sense of the world, it must understand that the task of theory is not the same as the task of politics. To be sure, a theoretical concern with the subordination of women is usually motivated by a political commitment to greater gender equality. And theories about the social world, unlike most theories about the natural world, cannot easily be separated from moral commitments. But advancing the interests of women and understanding the role that gender plays in subordinating women are not identical tasks. One requires reconciling differences and expressing solidarity, the other requires tough-minded thinking and a willingness to choose between positions in contradiction. One appeals primarily to other women, the other must reach out and persuade anyone. One wants to imagine a new world, the other insists that we must understand the present world.

Interestingly enough, the requirements for a more appropriate theory of gender inequality often come not from academic feminists, but from political ones. There are feminist writers, such as Susan Faludi, who maintain a posture of "nothing has ever changed" militance, but other feminists have begun to be openly critical of some of the more utopian and politically impractical aspects of feminist thought. The real world has most definitely intruded on feminist political activity. Power is there to be obtained; a surprising amount has been obtained; and strategies should therefore be designed to obtain more. A distinct deradicalization has begun to occur among those who devote themselves directly to politics.

At the same time, intellectual feminists—who in theory are obligated to accept or reject ideas on the basis of evidence, logic and reason—stress the permanence of gender discrimination and downplay the change. The more the situation of women improves, the more radical becomes the critique of female inequality. It is as if the theorizing about gender conducted in the American academy has been excused from the necessity to bring theory and the real world into any relationship with one another.

The result is a new form of academic writing. Books written by feminist theorists look like academic books: they are published by top-of-the-line university presses; every effort is made to mimic the colorless prose that generally passes for scholarship; footnotes abound; and theoretical understanding is proclaimed as the objective. But without a reality check, all too many feminist writers cite each other's work in self-referential fashion, develop non-falsifiable arguments, rely on anecdotes, dismiss the possibility of objectivity, ignore or interpret away the evidence that thwarts their speculations and end their books with utopian fantasies. Determined to cling to the notion that gender oppression is as deeply structured and as pernicious as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever, feminist theorists seek political objectives that override all other commitments, even as political feminists develop respect for evidence and the discomforting properties of ideas.

Many of the problems revealed by these efforts to create a theory of gender have a common cause: the world of feminist theory remains a narrow one, confined to professors with similar political and intellectual dispositions. This is a situation that need not persist. There is every reason to want to see an ambitious effort to understand why women have not achieved the full equality and respect as persons they ought to have. If women, despite the dramatic gains they have made, are still unequal, one can understand a certain reluctance to look the real world in the face. Yet no change will come, in theory or in politics, until those who deal with gender develop theoretical respect for the very realities for which they have political contempt. •

The Bell Jar

BY DAVID BROMWICH

The Silent Woman: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes by Janet Malcolm

(Knopf, 208 pp., $23)

The jacket photo on Janet Malcolm's new book shows the author standing relaxed, arms folded, three-quarters turned to the camera, her glasses pushed above her forehead. The pose seems to say: "I may not see you clearly yet, but wait." Meanwhile, the look is direct and possibly sympathetic: it gives nothing at all away. You would know from this picture what you learn from Malcolm's writings, that she is an attentive listener, the sort who can lead people to blurt out more than they realize. Her published portraits honestly record the signals by which she gets that response. She does it in every journalist's way, by cues of geniality and shared experience. Often the cues are partial. Almost always, the subject talks on. Armed with this skill of tacit coaxing, Malcolm has survived in a bad time for journalism as one of the few living writers who practice the *New Yorker* profile in the grand manner. She has been able to carry the genre to the length it needs; and she possesses a further and a more unusual distinction. In America she is the only reporter who writes books on culture that show the mark of a participant and not a spectator.

Two methods have long been established for profile journalism. One was Lillian Ross's way: a tape recorder, notations of personal habits and surfaces, an immense process of selection and a story whose aim was to appear to narrate itself. In *Picture*, Ross's account of the making of John Huston's film *The Red Badge of Courage*, her method of oblique analysis and deflection produced a masterpiece. But quite another style emerged from the same magazine in the '30s: a style whose irony—the regulated hatred of the journalist for his subject—was plain from the first paragraph to the last. Of this subgenre, Wolcott Gibbs's profiles of Thomas E. Dewey and Alexander Woollcott are the masterpieces; the journalist, without ever saying "I," made his presence unmistakable with every twist of syntax. Gibbs's subjects may never have met him, but they certainly knew what hit them.

Ross's style, which Malcolm has refined, is a more elusive thing: when it cuts somebody clean through, you are never sure quite how the deed was done. The process becomes more baffling when the author dwells on the privilege of the first-person singular. This, in fact, was Malcolm's advance on Ross: the reporter now frankly solicits attention to the materials of the workshop; she tells you how she got interested in the story, and confesses her bewilderments and anxieties. In the middle of things, you often find her awkwardly questioning herself; the awkwardness is left in, not without a sense of the rewards that belong to candor. Academic critics call this "thematizing subjectivity." Editors call it putting yourself into the picture. In *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession* and *In the Freud Archives*, Malcolm wrote as someone persuaded of the wisdom of the psychoanalytic profession, yet vulnerably uncertain of her confidence in the bearers of that wisdom. Since then, she has kept looking for examples of the wise and the good, or rather the wise from whom, in spite of their all-too-human faults, we may hope to learn about the good. Apart from psychoanalysts, her main candidates have appeared to be artists, but *The Silent Woman* is her first attempt to explain why anyone might associate art with wisdom, and the vulgarization of art with the evasion of wisdom.

A journalist, as Malcolm points out, is oddly situated for this task. Her business is to inquire and expose, whereas the way of wisdom is reticence. Whatever her motives for creating this antithesis, Malcolm does consistently press it upon her readers. (Her wise men never talk, or are imagined as never talking, in a loud voice.) Still, in dealing with certain stories a journalist's worldly wisdom may be necessary. Consider the case of Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes. The literary estate of a woman who wrote some good poems, and then some startling poems about suicide and then committed suicide, is presided over by another poet who happens to have been the husband of the first. The second poet is set upon, his probity challenged, his character assailed, his privacy besieged by a horde of culture-gossips. These gossips strongly resemble journalists, but they call themselves biographers. Where shall the surviving poet find an advocate? Where if not in a journalist who understands the spectacle as soon as she sees it? She understands because she could have been one of the gossips. That, in a brief abstract, is the plot of *The Silent Woman*: a parable of one of the inquisitive who came to sympathize with one of the reticent.

I had better, at this point, confess an interest, which really amounts to a failure of interest. Plath matters to me less than she does to the host of biographers surveyed here. Nor was I ever sure in reading the book how far Malcolm had remained an ironist and how far she herself had become a casualty of the Biographer's Transference: the process by which the pathos of an artist's life, by study and gradual immersion, is made the source of an irresistible appeal on behalf of the artist's work. Plath may typify her generation, as Malcolm once or twice suggests—their illusions, their feelings about America, England, marriage, culture—but to that extent she is representative in a kitsch sense. A lot of what she speaks for is the power of cliché, the illusions that bind a generation in one shock of nonrecognition.

Her poetry has not quite the distinction Malcolm claims for it, limited though that claim is to the later poetry. Even in *Ariel*, there is an imposing element of sheer costume, of period-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drapery of the emotions. The costume is more severe, the effects doubtless more spine-tingling, than had been the case in her earlier work. But who, in the absence of the Plath legend, would agree that the following lines have much interest as poetry?

> Dying
> Is an art, like everything else.
> I do it exceptionally well.
>
> I do it so it feels like hell.
> I do it so it feels real.
> I guess you could say I've a call.

The cuts of the free-verse line are neatly done and there is a dried-out intimacy in the diction. The phrase "like everything else" is false, but it gets by. Where else can you find writing like this? In the '60s, in songs:

> She was a day tripper,
> One way ticket, yeah.
> It took me so long to find
> out.
> And I found out.

Even cold on the page, I think I prefer Lennon. This sort of writing needs an English voice and in the last months of her life Plath had acquired it.

One of the best criticisms of Plath was written by Elizabeth Hardwick, and it openly addressed the puzzle about voice. Having listened to early and late recordings of the poet reading from her work, Hardwick reported a surprise at the contrast; the young Plath had been ordinary, correct, palpably young and American and rehearsed, but in the later reading

> these bitter poems—"Daddy," "Lady Lazarus," "The Applicant," "Fever 103° "—were "beautifully" read, projected in full-throated, plump, diction-perfect, Englishy, mesmerizing cadences, all round and rapid, and paced and spaced. Poor recessive Massachusetts had been erased. "I have done it again!" Clearly, perfectly, staring you down. She seemed to be standing at a banquet like Timon, crying, "Uncover, dogs, and lap!"

The poetry had become a voice with a worldview. Of its kind and of its time, it was as proficient as Byron's ("Fever 103°" is as "beautiful" as *Manfred*), but the life you have to know to explain it is at once more posed and less interesting. We are speaking in any case—regarding a large part of Byron's work and a larger of Plath's—of poetry that does not survive without a good deal of help from the life.

Two extra-aesthetic apologies have been offered for the poetry: the age-of-atrocity defense and the feminist defense. Regarding the latter, Malcolm is wholly skeptical. She does not care for the ease with which Plath has been made to appear the victim of men, the victim, above all, of her husband, Ted Hughes. Far more credence is given here to the idea of Plath as victim of the age. The poet's own attempts to link her suffering to historical catastrophes—in a poem like "Daddy," for example, where she is the Jew sent to Dachau and her father the Nazi commandant—are not uniquely crass unless one recruits them to some such dubious entity as "the Literature of the Holocaust": an appropriation that cannot be blamed on Plath. And yet, simply as poetry, "Daddy" has the same flaw as many of her later poems. In reaction against the opacity of personal pain, the poet associates herself with the public weight of a collective pain. The result is comprehension of neither. But here is Malcolm on Plath as exemplary victim:

> Imaginative literature is produced under the pressure of an inner interrogation like Lanzmann's. Poets and novelists and playwrights make themselves, against terrible resistances, give over what the rest of us keep safely locked within our hearts.... To say that Plath did not earn her right to invoke the names of Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen is off the mark. It is we who stand accused, who fall short, who have not accepted the wager of imagining the unimaginable, of cracking Plath's code of atrocity.

DRAWING BY DAVID SCHORR FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

I certainly have not cracked the code of the last sentence, though I hear in it echoes of A. Alvarez and George Steiner. What code does finally link the young woman who killed herself with people killed against their will a generation before? The second sentence above implies that the decoding to be performed is psychoanalytic: artists are brave in unlocking secrets of the heart that the rest of us keep under repression. Is the secret then the wish to die?

Whatever one makes of the passage, it seems to me to rest on a wrong understanding of the purposes of art. A work of art does not say: "These agonies are the essence of contemporary reality." It does not make us want to say or do anything practical, not even to subscribe to a vision of our generation. On the other hand, a faculty for observing freshly does matter in art, and Plath's poems are imitative to an extent unrealized by her admirers. From Lowell she got a middle style, unconceited and close to prose, for putting into poetry a self both matter-of-fact and glamorous—lurid in some of the data it most casually delivers, and grandly unimpressed by its own excess. Roethke was almost as important an influence—for the texture of her naturalistic details, the animistic jolts of pleasure and pain with which she absorbed bits of the landscape and personified its creatures. The animal poems by Hughes that went into his book *Luper-*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cal, written during his first years with Plath, were a model for the dry decisiveness of tone she came to favor. Her last poems are resonant, they have a finality of eloquence available at command and they include some of the best-*written* poetry of the time. But in any imaginative sense, it would be missing the point to call them inventive.

Maybe Malcolm was trapped, by her decision to write this book at all, into the sort of assertion she makes for Plath as a keeper of the "code of atrocity." Her sense of Plath, of Hughes, of marriage, of many things, cuts her off from sympathy with the feminist story, and yet if some story about the poetry itself did not emerge triumphant, Plath's life in art would turn out to be mainly about the construction of a legend—by biographers, moralists, critics and a husband. Indeed, in spite of the book's appeal for aesthetic justification, Malcolm ends up proving how far Plath was a legend the age demanded and got. The biographers nailed Hughes as the killer and nailed him again as the stinting executor. With every gothic and romantic touch they added to the life, Hughes dwindled while Plath grew larger and stronger and also, curiously, more pathetic. The exception among the biographers is Anne Stevenson; but she was "authorized," and came to regret her authorization. Every idea she ventured was subject to curatorial probings, and the life she published bore little resemblance to the life she had imagined.

Malcolm seems happiest in this book when writing about Olwyn Hughes, sister and protector of Ted and literary agent for the Plath estate. Olwyn is a sublime monster, "a monster without being a myth," as was said of Lady Bracknell; she comes out swinging against all comers, suggesting cuts, refusing permissions, resolute in her execution of Hughes-o-centric doctrine on the Life and the Marriage. Olwyn Hughes rebuffs even Malcolm, in style, when an unpleasant piece of suburban castle-combing is gently proposed by the journalist:

> "Sylvia died this month," I said to Olwyn in the Indian restaurant. "On which day was it?"
>
> "It happens to be today," she said. "I realized it yesterday, when I was dating a letter to you. It's strange."
>
> "The house on Fitzroy Road where she died is near here, isn't it?" I said. "After lunch, would you walk over there with me?"
>
> "Darling, I don't think I want to do that," Olwyn said. She lit a cigarette.

There is more in the same vein, and though Olwyn Hughes will not be writing a biography, one would pay a small price for a selection of her letters to the biographers.

With its quest for the personalia of a legend and its portrait of the narrator as detective and voyeur, *The Silent Woman*, as Malcolm herself observes, partly recalls Henry James's *Aspern Papers*, the story of a careful listener who is eventually exposed as a "publishing scoundrel." She omits to mention a nearer Jamesian prototype, "The Birthplace," which tells of an appointed guide in Stratford-upon-Avon who nurses a vicarious tenderness toward the dubious relics in his keeping. This hero comes to resent the touring public, much as Malcolm resents the reading public the biographers feed: "there was somebody.... But They've killed Him. And, dead as He is, They keep it up, They do it over again. They kill him every day." If her book's atmosphere stays closer anyway to Trollope than to James, the reason may be that her interest in detection seldom passes from the particular to the general. She is rightly admired for deftness in seeing through pretentions, in proving people to be far from that which they suppose themselves. She is less interested in seeing through status. Whether someone got where he did by fair means or by foul matters a great deal. *That* he should have got there matters more.

More than most journalists, Malcolm needs a hero; she will take the part if necessary, but prefers to cast someone else—where possible, someone of strong ethical or aesthetic presence to serve as a foil to the pack of the corrupt, the vulgar, the venal and the glib. *The Silent Woman* finds its hero in Ted Hughes. There can be no doubt that his refusal to grant an interview added to the respect that Malcolm felt for him. But many readers will know him from other contexts. He wrote, in *Gaudete*, poems of exorbitant externalized violence. That phase came long after the death of Plath, but the pressure toward it was visible in his early work. It is difficult to suppress such knowledge, regarding a gifted artist and a complex man, and difficult to know what to do with the knowledge. Is there a connection worth analyzing between this poet and the poet he married, who wrote about violence against the self and put that violence into practice? Malcolm's solution—to say nothing at all—is honorable but not satisfying. "The facts of imaginative literature," she believes, "are as hard as the stone that Dr. Johnson kicked. We must always take the novelist's and the playwright's and the poet's word." An excellent thing, most critics would reply, if we could be sure what the novelist's or playwright's or poet's word *is*. But Malcolm is sure. What then is Ted Hughes's word?

By staying behind the scenes, by not participating in the journalist's game, by his repeated opting out of the longer and uglier game of the biographers, Hughes won Malcolm's admiration. She credits him with "a kind of Chekhovian largeheartedness and melancholy"; his letters to the intrusive scholars, defending his privacy and his memories and the lives of his surviving family, move her as they move us. In a well-plotted moment she subjects her sympathy with him to a tentative scrutiny. She has been driven to his house, where she now stands outside looking in, with a feeling of reverence and conscious trespass:

> I saw something that suggested the Hugheses were not away, that my intrusion might not be going unmarked. Hanging from one of the trees on the front lawn was a fully stocked bird feeder, around which English robins and sparrows were swarming. I felt a return of my feeling of tenderness toward Hughes—I felt his reality, his aliveness, his stuckness and I felt shame at my complicity in the chase that has made his life a torment; I had now joined the pack of his pursuers. But I continued my inspection of the house.

Hughes was possibly indoors writing a poem about English robins and sparrows being eaten alive by a hawk. But let us look a little further into the tenderness of Malcolm, which comes out elsewhere in a passing touch.

Describing the woman for whom Hughes deserted Plath, and whom he lived with for some time after—who, like Plath, killed herself (taking their child with her)—Malcolm searches for an appropriate emotion of response. She elects to narrate the incident indirectly, as recounted to her by Anne Stevenson:

> Anne then told the horrifying story of Assia Wevill's death. Wevill was the preternaturally beautiful and sexually magnetic woman who precipitated the Plath-Hughes breakup. In 1967 she had a child by Hughes, a girl named Shura, and, in 1969, in a bizarre gesture of imitation, she, too, gassed herself—adding the new twist of gassing the little girl as well. *Hughes's sufferings may be (or, rather, can hardly be) imagined.*

The italics are mine but italics do not seem enough. An effort, at least, to imagine the sufferings of Assia Wevill would have a place among the sympathies of a different kind of reporter. The phrase "adding the new twist" is odd—as if Wevill's killing herself (unlike Plath's) were an artistic contrivance; as if the solemnly imposing idea that "Death's an art" were fated to be merely "bizarre" the second time around. One can appreciate Malcolm's refusal of the opportunity for gloating. At the same time one may

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be stunned by the way the repetition gives not a moment's pause to her emerging portrait of the largehearted, the melancholy, the Chekhovian Ted Hughes. On the contrary, the second suicide adds to his stature.

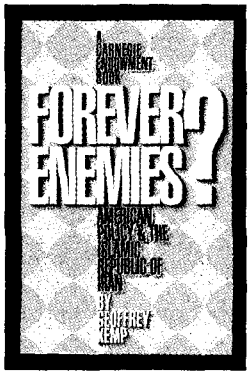
Hughes is not and never was Chekhovian. He is, if we need a word, a Gnostic vitalist—a believer in the hidden god of the self, whose potency is directed explosively against the God of creation. In person, when Plath knew him, he seems to have had some of the traits of a guru—attractive especially to women, and an unlucky choice for them. Friends right up to the present remark on his tendency to tell people Please to do something: it is not recorded that anyone who stayed close to him ever failed to do the thing he asked. Somehow Malcolm has misread his strengths as nothing but a decent insistence on personal sincerity. Yet the opposing evidence stares at her in some of the letters she quotes, and in his introduction to Plath's journals, which she discusses in her opening pages. He is always talking of the "real self"—of how, for example, in Plath's final months he could see quite suddenly that "the self I had married, after all ... her real self, being the real poet, would now speak for itself." Watch out for the person who knows exactly who and what your real self is. In a letter to A. Alvarez, where Hughes understandably reproaches this old friend for publishing a confessional account of Plath's last days, he launches again into the deeper-than-friendship dogma about the self: "It's only by seeing how the U.S.-ethos journalist in you rationalized you out of your real heart and your real imagination that I can understand how that piece came to appear, and how what began by being written in a sacred way by one part of you" and so on. In a sacred way, your real heart, your real self, your real imagination: Hughes has the wisdom-voice of a psychoanalyst, and that makes Malcolm doubly trust him.

Yet this way of talking is full of paradox for a consideration of Plath's fame. Hughes's defense of his privacy keeps coming back to the ideas about their mother with which the Hughes-Plath children will now be forced to live. But it is possible to exaggerate that burden: at some point, as anyone ever on the punishing end of public idiocy has found, the pain stops because it has to. Besides, there is a question whether anything more shocking than Plath's last poems could possibly await the discovery of her children—poems that Hughes encouraged and continues to celebrate. It was the publication of her "real self" that gave a high resting place to her contemporary reputation. She disclosed the sort of sacred horrors others may have harbored but kept concealed. The association of the horrors with her personal life gave the poetry its attractive-repulsive charge.

Malcolm cares for Hughes most of all because he guards his privacy. Her sympathy for the best-behaved of Plath scholars, Anne Stevenson, makes as much sense as her residual tenderness for Hughes. Her causerie against the invasive biographers may have seemed the necessary other side of her charity. After all, these people have put themselves in the wrong by making literary killings from the real selves of others. But what range of tactics does that justify Malcolm in using against them? In the last chapter of her book a power of blame reserved until then is allowed its full swing. The effect is most pronounced in her dealings with the latest and cleverest of the biographers, Jacqueline Rose.

Rose's book, *The Haunting of Sylvia Plath*, came out at the time Malcolm was conducting her interviews. Its orientation is feminist, psychoanalytic (on different lines from Malcolm's own), theoretical to the last degree and anti-Hughes (both Olwyn and Ted). It was well-aimed at an academic audience, but written with great fluency, and it enjoyed an immediate success. Malcolm decided to interview Rose and found her, though "an adept of a theory of criticism whose highest values are uncertainty, anxiety and ambiguity," a person "surrounded by a kind of nimbus of self-possession." As they talked, Malcolm reports, both were conscious of a rivalry that goes unspoken in most such encounters; in this one it almost reached articulation and did in a way emerge allegorically. Having permitted Malcolm to read a letter by Hughes, the rival biographer regretted having done so: "I think this is an awkward area, ethically."

There is a comedy here that Malcolm could have made more of. Rose had pilloried Hughes for narrowing the entire achievement of Plath to the high-art poetry of *Ariel*. Hughes commented in the letter: "Miss Rose thought she was writing a book about a writer dead thirty years and seems to have overlooked, as I say, the plain fact that she has ended up writing a book largely about me." Rose had author's-interest reasons for not wanting this unpublished sentence to see the light, as Malcolm, with her different thesis, had author's-interest reasons for pressing the same sentence into public view. In retrospect this hesitation



TWO NEW BOOKS ON IRAN

FOREVER ENEMIES?
American Policy and the Islamic Republic of Iran
Geoffrey Kemp

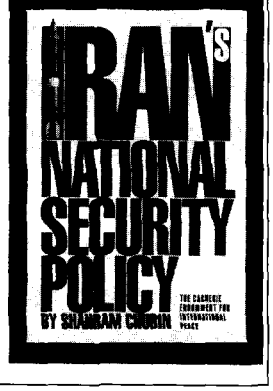
"Kemp's analysis of what needs to be done regarding America's relationship with Iran is a timely and truly important contribution to our strategic thinking." **Zbigniew Brzezinski**
Center for Strategic & Int'l Studies

"Geoffrey Kemp has written a subtle and careful book. Kemp neither demonizes Iran, nor offers it vindication...A discerning book by a shrewd analyst." **Fouad Ajami**
Johns Hopkins University
1994/144 pp./paper 0-87003-036-1 $9.95

IRAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY:
Capabilities, Intentions and Impact
Shahram Chubin

"This work is essential reading for those who want to understand the vital question of stability in the Persian Gulf."
Paul Wolfowitz, Dean
Johns Hopkins University

"His reminder to Iran how Iranian ambitions and excesses have come to threaten their security should be required reading in Tehran." **Ambassador Richard W. Murphy**
Council on Foreign Relations
1994/106 pp./paper 0-87003-031-0 $10.95



Published by the Carnegie Endowment . Distributed by Brookings Publications 1-800-275-1447 or (202) 797-6258.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between a biographer and a journalist draws from Malcolm an extraordinary effusion—an "unsent letter" to Rose in which her implicit criticisms of the book, for its uneasy mingling of public and private realms, actual and imaginary events, published and unpublished writings, are all made to revolve around Rose's remark about the "awkward area." The short way of saying what Malcolm's unsent letter says at length is that "post-structuralism"—or whatever generic name you give the approach to poetry and life that asserts experience to have no special relation to the experiencer—is an ideology that cannot be lived. When, says Malcolm to Rose, you spoke up suddenly for modesty and privacy, you showed that you live by a more conventional but a better standard than you espouse in writing.

But here is where the brew gets rich. The accusing "unsent letter" is not only printed in Malcolm's book, when in life it was neither spoken nor sent. It is also allowed to *precede* the journalistic account of the interview with Rose and thereby to skew the reader's sense of the encounter. The letter is followed by a nervous meditation on the "genre" of unsent letters, a genre that

> might reward study. We have all contributed to it.... We are, in effect, saying that our idea is too precious to be entrusted to the gaze of the actual addressee, who may not grasp its worth, so we "send" it to his equivalent in fantasy, on whom we can absolutely count for an understanding and appreciative reading.

"We" and "we all" are acts of inclusion that invite the reader to stand with the author in a new kind of awkward area. I see why she wants company, but am not sure I can join her. I do not recognize my own unsent letters in Malcolm's account of the reasons for writing them. Usually I did it because I was feeling angry and self-righteous.

Even granting the artistic license for which Malcolm asks, the fact remains that she is working with the name and the circumstantial details of an actual person and an actual life. How do her liberties differ from those of the biographers? The unsent letter is not, quite, a violation of privacy. It is, in a way hard to define, a trespass against manners—the more so when placed at the climax of a book whose burden is the tension between the dignity of personal life and the savage publicity that surrounds some lives. At the crucial point, this argument is braced by a piece of moral one-upmanship that plays with a stacked deck.

I read *The Silent Woman* twice, and found it did not diminish on acquaintance. The details are nicely charged. And yet, because Malcolm does possess the intelligence of a novelist, one wonders at the delicacy with which she has poised herself in the stance of both a reliable and an unreliable narrator. It can be hard on a story when the author becomes one of her own characters. It is twice as hard when she is a character about whom we cannot make up our minds.

The Silent Woman closes with a visit to the flat of Trevor Thomas, Plath's neighbor when she committed suicide and perhaps the last person to see her alive. He lives now in a "magisterial mess" and talks without hesitation of the past. Compulsive, self-absorbed, a particular admirer of *The Bell Jar* ("I like novels. I like memoirs. Best of all, I like biographies"), he is as much an enigma as Plath, and Malcolm makes his dwelling a symbol of "the disorderly actuality that is a life." On the way back on the train she reads the *Who's Who* entry on Thomas that he has given her—an entry that "was long, and listed many jobs in museums and universities, several of only a year's duration, and cited three publications in museum journals." Why are the data so important? One thing they may be telling her is: stand back. That, too, is something the novelists teach. Ultimately it is no use putting yourself into the picture. You will be in it in any case, in ways you hardly dreamed of.

DAVID BROMWICH teaches at Yale University and is writing a study of Edmund Burke.

Red Herrings

BY WALTER LAQUEUR

Special Tasks: The Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness—A Soviet Spymaster by Pavel Sudoplatov and Anatoly Sudoplatov with Gerrold L. and Leona P. Schecter

(Little, Brown, 509 pp., $24.95)

Former employees of the KGB are showing an admirable degree of adaptability and initiative in new jobs. Some have gone into banking, others into import-export, yet others into high technology or the provision of private security services for the new moguls. One named Smirnov is keeping up the tradition of his great-grandfather of vodka fame. Those too old for an adventurous life in the private sector now write their memoirs.

Pavel Sudoplatov, one of these authors, joined the Soviet secret service at the age of 14 in 1921 and faithfully served it until his arrest shortly after Stalin's death. In 1938, following the purge and execution of most of his superiors, he was appointed to a position of considerable importance—head of "special assignments." In this capacity he helped to plan and supervise the killing of Trotsky and other Russian and Ukrainian émigrés. He also played a central role in the organization of partisan warfare behind the German front lines and in Soviet atomic espionage.

In his preface to *Special Tasks*, Robert Conquest calls this "the most sensational, the most devastating and in many ways the most informative autobiography to emerge from the Stalinist milieu." Sensational it certainly is, but I doubt whether "devastating" is the most appropriate term, and "informative" it is only if read with great caution. The old Latin adage caveat emptor ("let the buyer beware") should be printed in giant lettering on the cover of this book, which was written in collaboration with Sudoplatov's son, a Moscow academician, and Gerrold and Leona Schecter, formerly of *Time* magazine. It has come under heavy attack, mainly for suggesting that leading nuclear scientists (Oppenheimer, Fermi, Szillard, Bohr and others connected with the Manhattan Project) were, in one way or another, Soviet agents.

Whenever charges of this kind have been made against establishment figures, from Alger Hiss onward, angry and loyal friends have jumped to the defense. But it is useful to recall that in the murky world of intrigue and espionage very little can be a priori ruled out; an account from a seemingly important source like Sudoplatov cannot be dismissed outright simply because it appears outrageous. Still, if the charges

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cannot be substantiated, those who made them should bear the consequences.

How reliable a witness is Sudoplatov? To judge by the non-nuclear part of the book (twelve chapters out of thirteen), his record is dubious. Some of his stories have the ring of truth but most of the foreign names that are mentioned, and some of the Russian names, are wrongly spelled; biographical information is mistaken or garbled. Of course this could be the fault of the book's editors, who plainly did not enlist a reader reasonably familiar with Soviet and European history in the 1930s and '40s. For example, the predecessor of Admiral Canaris, head of the German *Abwehr*, was an officer named Patzig, not "Alexander" as Sudoplatov writes. Some of the mistakes are hilarious—my favorite is the rendering of *Poale Zion* ("workers of Zion") as *Politsai Zion* ("Police of Zion"). What the author says about prewar Yugoslavia, about Iraq in the 1950s, about German Communists in the 1930s, about Russian émigrés, about the purge of the Soviet generals in 1937 and a great many other subjects is wrong, at least in part. I am not an expert on Ukrainian emigration from the USSR in the 1930s, but I suspect that in this respect, too, his account is not fully accurate.

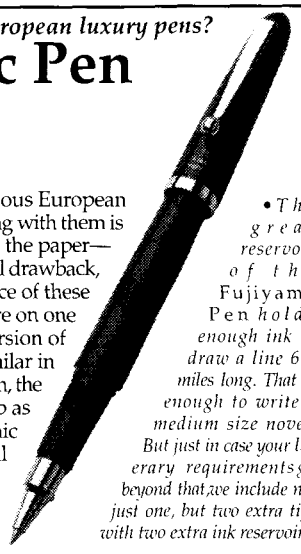
Intelligence services are known to have engaged in stupid projects, but the initiative (reported by Sudoplatov) to overthrow and kill Hitler through the good offices of a Polish playboy (Count Radziwill) and a German movie star (Olga Chekhova, mistakenly identified as Chekhov's niece) must be a close contender for an all-time record. Nor does the escapade appear as a temporary aberration, for ten years later this couple again figures in an attempt by the KGB to unify Germany. These accounts strain the reader's credulity. But even if the author gets the date of the execution of his own boss (Nikolai Yezhov) wrong, even if he does not correctly remember the name of the leading Soviet filmmaker of his day, this does not necessarily invalidate all other claims: a man aged 87 cannot be expected to have total recall.

The impression gained from these recollections is that the main thrust of Soviet intelligence operations before 1941 was misdirected. Efforts were focused on Russian émigrés of the left and the right who constituted no danger whatsoever to Soviet power, whereas Soviet intelligence in Nazi Germany was neglected and very weak. By and large, operations there were run by a network of amateurs, and in any case, contact with Berlin broke down during the decisive period. If the Soviet Union survived

Does this Japanese model outperform famous European luxury pens?

Fujiyama™ Ceramic Pen still only $39.95*

But read this ad for an even better deal!



If you've ever had occasion to write with one of the famous European pens, you know what marvelous products they are. Writing with them is a joy. It is almost effortless. The pen appears to float across the paper—even your thoughts seem to flow more freely. The substantial drawback, however, as with so many other nice things, is that the price of these luxury pens is awfully high. It's easy to spend $150 or more on one of them. Our Japanese friends have created their own version of these luxury pens. They are equally pleasing and quite similar in appearance, heft and feel. They have the same hi-lacquer finish, the same fine gold-tone accents and the same gold-plated clip as those famous European luxury pens. The exclusive ceramic writing tip provides silk-smooth, effortless writing. It will never flatten, stall or skip, even after hardest and longest use.

The most remarkable thing about the *Fujiyama Ceramic Pen* is its price. We are the exclusive distributors and are therefore able to offer it for just $39.95. But, we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $79.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Discard those tacky ballpoint pens and those clumsy felt tips. Write smoothly and easily, give character and good appearance to your writing. And make a really great buy, an even greater one if you take advantage of our 3-for-2 "better deal". Get with it—get your *Fujiyama Ceramic Pen(s)* today!

• *The great reservoir of the* Fujiyama Pen *holds enough ink to draw a line 6.3 miles long. That is enough to write a medium size novel. But just in case your literary requirements go beyond that, we include not just one, but two extra tips with two extra ink reservoirs.*

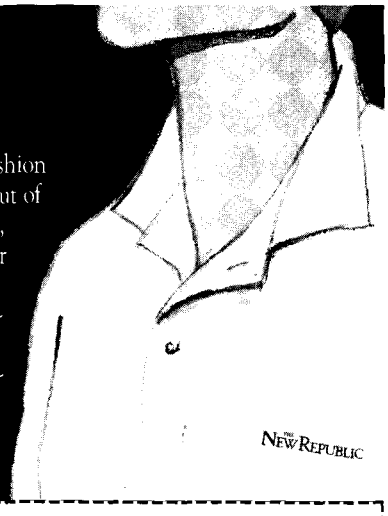
FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 797-7367
8 a.m. to 6 p.m., 7 days a week

For quantity orders (100+), call Peaches Jeffries, our Wholesale/Premium Manager at (415) 543-6675 or write her at the address below.

Please give order Code **#1004A337**. If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone # for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. Add our standard $4.95 shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for CA delivery). You have 30-day return and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

since 1967
haverhills®
185 Berry Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

THE NEW REPUBLIC
POLO SHIRT



The New Republic is proud to present the ultimate fashion statement: *The New Republic* Polo shirt. Fashioned out of 100% cotton and custom embroidered with our logo, *The New Republic* polo will become the staple of your casual wardrobe. It also makes the perfect gift for TNR aficionados on your shopping list. *The New Republic* polo is available in crisp white with the logo embroidered in navy blue, in adult sizes small, medium, large and extra large. Only $24.50 per shirt plus $3.25 for first class shipping. Satisfaction guaranteed! Order yours today.

Name _____
Phone _____
Shipping Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Qty. ____ Size (S,M,L,XL) ____ Total Price _____

If using Visa, MC or AMEX, please provide the following information:
Account Number _____ Expiration Date _____
Signature _____

To order, call toll-free
1-800-875-9151
(M-F, 9-5 EST)

Mail this form along with check or money order made payable to
TNR Polo Shirt Offer, 1220 19th St, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20036

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the critical first two years after the German invasion, it was not thanks to its spies. Nor was it thanks to the partisans active behind the German lines. According to Sudoplatov, the partisan units under his overall command killed some 137,000 German soldiers; this happens to be the official Soviet figure prior to glasnost. It is an exaggeration by a factor of at least ten—more likely by twenty or thirty, as internal German documentation suggests.

Sudoplatov's figures usually have to be distrusted. In the preface he states that more than 90 percent of the Russian spies who sent crucial information from Western Europe during World War II were Jews, and that their Jewishness was one of the main reasons why the Soviet leadership did not give them true recognition after the war. It's true that an inordinate number of Soviet secret service operators were Jewish until the purges of 1937-1938, when all but a handful were shot. But the Soviet spies in Western Europe during the war were Philby, Blunt, Burgess and their friends in London, and the members of the Berlin-based "Red Orchestra," none of them Jewish by origin. This leaves Leopold Trepper, Alexander Rado and a few others—more likely 10 percent or 20 percent rather than 90 percent.

Soviet intelligence did, of course, have its successes, and not everything in this book seems to be wrong. But it would take a committee of experts to disentangle fact from fiction. The description of the preparation for Trotsky's murder in 1940 does seem to be authentic, as does the story of Wallenberg's disappearance and murder. The explanation of Kirov's murder in 1934 (*cherchez la femme*) could be correct, but this is by no means certain; it happened well before Sudoplatov assumed a position of authority. Generally speaking, the stories concerning himself and his immediate colleagues are of interest; when he writes about the activities of a rival organization (military intelligence) he seems to be on less safe ground. There is a great deal of special pleading all along, but this is true of most political autobiographies.

Sudoplatov argues that Beria's image as master criminal, Stalin's Svengali, the greatest culprit of all, has been intentionally overdrawn by his former colleagues, mainly in order to whitewash themselves. The culpability of others, such as Malenkov, seems to have been equal. But this is the consensus now among Western experts, as well as among Russian archivists and historians, who had access to the archives (which Sudoplatov, incidentally, did not).

Sudoplatov's account of his struggle after 1953 to be released from prison and rehabilitated also seems authentic. But his colossal impertinence recalls the young man who, having murdered his parents, is fighting to be granted orphan status. It is true that the accusations against Sudoplatov concerned treason (which he did not commit) rather than the multiple murders that he organized. But as for his crimes, Sudoplatov has no regrets. He claims that he merely carried out the orders of the Party: it was a different time, people now alive cannot understand this and are in no position to judge. If Stalin had not killed Trotsky, he pleads, Trotsky would have murdered Stalin and sabotaged the Soviet war effort. Sudoplatov was eventually released from prison in August 1968, the day after the invasion of Czechoslovakia. He was rehabilitated in 1991. However, since his medals were not returned to him, he says that he remained a victim of political repression.

The Sudoplatov interviews on which this book is based concern events that took place fifty or more years ago. Since then much of the information has been filtered several times over in the memory of those concerned. And thanks to KGB censorship, memories were selective to start with. Unpleasant facts were forgotten, suppressed or misrepresented, important events have faded from memory, unimportant ones are embellished and assume enormous significance. What remains are the anecdotes exchanged by a group of veterans in their 80s, meeting over a glass of tea in a private Moscow apartment or at a KGB sanatorium. "Do you remember, Pavel, how we...?"

This is the background against which Sudoplatov's most sensational revelations about nuclear espionage have to be assessed. There is little doubt that the U.S. atomic project was deeply infiltrated by the Soviets on various levels; the Rosenbergs were quite obviously, as Sudoplatov confirms, very minor cogs in this machine. Not all the names have been made public so far. But those mentioned by Sudoplatov don't seem credible. There is no real evidence supporting his accusations. Some of these physicists were not even involved in making the bomb. Furthermore, Sudoplatov's explanation of their actions makes little sense. He argues that they were afraid that Hitler would get nuclear devices first; but if this were so, then passing on secrets to the Soviets would be of no help whatsoever.

Edward Teller and others who were either involved in the work at Oak Ridge and Los Alamos or have closely studied it have pointed to many mistakes, major or minor, in this book. As a result, no real credence has been given to the allegations. Of the major figures involved in making the bomb, a few are still alive (Bethe, Teller, et al.), but all of the alleged spies are now dead. If they were still living, the publishers of this book would face major libel actions. In any case, although Sudoplatov avoids the

Hooded Crow and Speedwell

His unblinking coal-chunk eye awake
To carrion or a young nestling fallen
His way, that self-possessed hooded fellow
Hops on the chimney-stack, ready to lurch
Out on the leathery menace of his wing-stroke.

Dream-bothered, up before the farmers,
I hunch by the fire and watch him. At lambing time
The herdsmen blast away at the crow, or throw stones.
He swoops at their shaky wool-fluff heartbeats.
Have a care for the baby. Keep the kitten indoors.

The same day, out walking, not so much to get
Anywhere as to wipe from my feet the reprimand
Of the grave I stood by in my dream, I am buoyed
Up by swells of buttercups, startled by wild orchids.
Then a downpour soaks me before I can find that

Bright-eyed blue I needed, growing
Threaded into a hedge: rained-on glances
Of speedwell—blue as the sky I wished for, purpling
To gloaming, no bigger than a baby's tooth. Why
Have I walked a mile to find it? What is it saying?

RICHARD TILLINGHAST

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

question, it is still a matter of dispute how much the whole espionage effort helped the Soviet scientific establishment to construct its own bomb.

Glasnost and the (partial) opening of Russian archives have resulted in sensational journalistic books and also in learned articles with dozens of footnotes that have found their way even into the *American Historical Review*. The motives are mixed: there is the desire on the part of individuals to "put the record straight," to rehabilitate themselves, to stress their achievements and to denigrate their rivals and enemies. Sudoplatov derides his foes in the secret service and praises his friends. There is disinformation; it could well be that Sudoplatov's focus on Oppenheimer, Fermi, Bohr, et al. is scheduled to obliterate the traces of the real moles. There is, last but not least, the wish to make money; the old-age pensions paid to spies are not princely, and what journalist does not want to write a best-seller? As Dr. Johnson put it a long time ago, nobody but a fool writes for anything but money.

Outright falsifications are rare in this business. They are risky and on the whole unnecessary. They can easily be disproved, as shown in the case of Sudoplatov's atomic spies. It is generally sufficient to squeeze the facts in one direction or another, to insinuate, to delete seemingly unimportant details, to shift accents. This can make an innocent person appear suspect; before you know it, a suspect has turned into a confirmed villain, and of course, vice versa.

But what if "oral history" of this kind is supported by documents? At this stage the revelations become truly dangerous, for anything written and retrieved from the archives acquires an aura of respectability and verisimilitude that oral history seldom has. But the truth is that documents, especially concerning espionage, are worthless unless one can be certain that they were not doctored, unless one can be sure that they were not deliberately selected out of a whole battery of files that remain hidden (or were destroyed)—unless, in brief, their entire context is abundantly clear, which in all probability will not be the case for a long time to come. It is probably true that "truth will come to light and murder cannot be hidden long." But the exact circumstances of the misdeeds committed in the murky corners of tyrannical regimes can be easily falsified or concealed, and the whole truth may not be known in our time.

WALTER LAQUEUR is the author most recently of *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia* (HarperCollins).

You deserve a factual look at...

"Greater Israel"

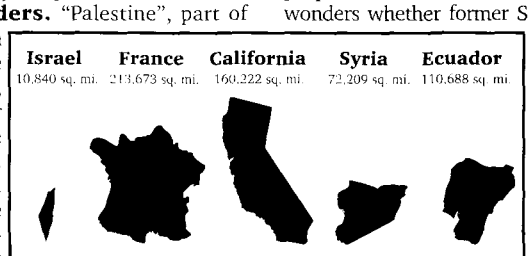
Does it have any relation to reality?

In May of 1989, James Baker, declared in an address to AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) that the Jewish state should once and for all forget about "the dream of a greater Israel". It was the first time that this phrase had been heard from the lips of a Western statesman. What does it mean? Does it have any relation to reality?

What are the facts?

Stripes on the flag. Arab propaganda has it that the two stripes on the flag of Israel, above and below the star of David, represent the Nile and the Euphrates River, respectively, and signify Israel's expansionist desire to form an empire that would supposedly reach from Cairo to Baghdad. But that has no basis in fact, of course. Nowhere in any documents of the Jewish state, in any statement by even the most "radical" spokesman can any reference to anything like that be found.

Israel's Borders. "Palestine", part of the Ottoman Empire before World War I, came under British mandate after that war. The Golan Heights were part of Palestine. Israel's current borders are the result of the 1948 War of Independence, in which six Arab armies invaded the new-born state, but were utterly defeated, and the 1967 Six-Day War, in which those same armies once again invaded Israel. In that war, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip, the vast Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. And Israel also *repossessed* the provinces of Judea/Samaria, (the "West Bank"), and the eastern part of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by the Jordanians nineteen years earlier when they invaded the just new-born Jewish state. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, Israel returned to it all of the Sinai. Israel is and has always been prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arabs living in Judea/Samaria. It is clear to all knowledgeable in military matters that, for immutable strategic reasons, Israel cannot for any foreseeable future abandon or yield military control of Judea/Samaria and of the Golan Heights.



Greater Israel? It's a myth. See for yourself!

The Myth of Greater Israel. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Most people don't realize how small it really is. One wonders whether former Secretary of State Baker was aware of it when he uttered his memorable phrase of "Greater Israel". A look at the map is revealing. Including the vaunted "West Bank", the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, the entire area of the country is barely over 10,000 square miles. France is twenty times as large as Israel, California fifteen times as large, Syria about seven times as large, and "tiny" Ecuador ten times as large. Israel is so small that its area is less than half the size of San Bernadino County, California; if it were dropped into Lake Michigan it would disappear from sight without a trace. The Arab countries in contrast are huge—they occupy twice the area of the United States.

It is clear that the concept of "Greater Israel", lacks any validity and has no basis in fact. To apply such a concept to a country as small as Israel would almost seem a mockery. Obviously, Israel has no territorial ambitions. All it wants is to live in peace within secure and defensible borders, just as any other country and as required under U.N. Resolution No. 242. But it seems that the *size* of Israel, whether "greater" or "lesser" is not at all the concern of Israel's implacable Arab enemies. The very *existence* of Israel, of a Jewish state in their midst of whatever size, is unacceptable to the Arabs. And unless that mindset changes, not until the Arab states have become democracies and have come to full acceptance of Israel, are willing to make *true* peace with it, and are prepared to establish normal and friendly relations with Israel can any possible territorial adjustment be considered. As it looks right now, that may still take some time.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East

P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco,CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit 501(c)(3)organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Yes, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of

$ _____ NR/42

❑ My contribution is in the amount of $50 or more. Please send me your booklet containing 24 of the ads that you have published in national media over the last few years.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to FLAME P.O. Box 590359 San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

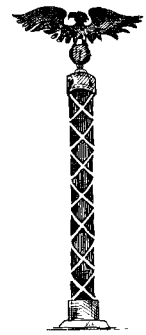
Animal dreams

I'M NOT AN ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIvist, but I sometimes think a little of that crusade's guerrilla spirit might benefit us goo-goo tenders and defenders of children. So I was encouraged by the cover of the recent and well-publicized report of the Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children. Though its title—"Starting Points"—is hopelessly bland, the bold photograph below leaps off the page: this poster child subverts the standard "Family of Man" graphic style of such publications. The face, featuring huge round dark eyes, is of course adorable and perfectly multicultural (neither black nor white—and only one small earring peeking out from beneath curls betrays her sex). Yet in its quest for Everychild, "Starting Points" has inadvertently transcended the typeless type. This face with those eyes, and no discernible neck, appeals to more than a parental and social sentiment; it speaks to a primal and biological bond. The little girl looks uncannily like a big-eyed, round-eyed, dark-eyed baby seal.

AFTER THE COVER, I COULDN'T help feeling disappointed by the worthy pronouncements that followed. Unlike animal defenders, who are well-known for being strident and specific—shrill, in short, and proud of it—in their pleas for their sweet-faced, blubbery constituents, the Carnegie task force report is quintessentially sermonic and sweeping:

> The crucially formative years of early childhood have become a time of peril and loss for millions of children and their families.... Persuaded that strong families and communities are essential to successful development in this early period, the task force chose these starting points: promoting responsible parenthood; guaranteeing quality child care choices; ensuring good health and protection; and mobilizing communities to support young children and their families.

(This from a group that claims it knew "it could not afford to be all over the map"!) And where animal defenders make no bones (so to speak) about driving home the same message again and again, this task force has the stentorian tone of being the first to sound the alarm. In fact, "Starting Points" amounts to an echo—to be sure, an ambitiously comprehensive echo—of the myriad family- and child-centered conferences and manifestos that have been launched with increasing regularity ever since Jimmy Carter held his White House Conference on Families in 1979. ("Beyond Rhetoric: A New American Agenda for Children and Families," from the National Commission on Children; "Families First," from the National Commission on America's Urban Families, etc.) By now, though, it's not just the rhetoric that is familiar. It's the claim to be getting beyond rhetoric (see above) that seems almost unforgivably stale.



NATURALLY THE CARNegie report wouldn't resort to a crude shock tactic like the clubbed seal skull photo that the animal defenders display, but it does venture a sophisticated variant. As the media accounts of "Starting Points" have emphasized, the report enlists neurobiologists—real scientists, not mere social scientists—as new and authoritative allies. According to their latest research, the formation of neural synapses in the brain happens more rapidly after birth, and is more environmentally sensitive, than was previously thought. These new discoveries suggest that very young brains subjected to severely deprived conditions may suffer irremediable damage. There's only one problem. As the task force quietly admits, there is as yet no actual *evidence* that it happens: "Researchers say that neurobiologists using brain scan technologies are on the verge of confirming these findings." Why should the cause hang on this? If the proof now doesn't come through, it's a letdown, and the needs of deprived children will by implication seem less urgent. And even if the proof does materialize, how much new will it really contribute? As "Starting Points" acknowledges, we already know from "more conventional studies of child development" that the first eighteen months are of crucial cognitive importance. In fact, the new proof could well be an impediment: if infants truly are neurologically unresilient, anything other than immediate and very intrusive remedial efforts starts to seem less pressing. Anything, that is, except immediate and very extensive rhetorical efforts, which are so much less daunting to orchestrate.

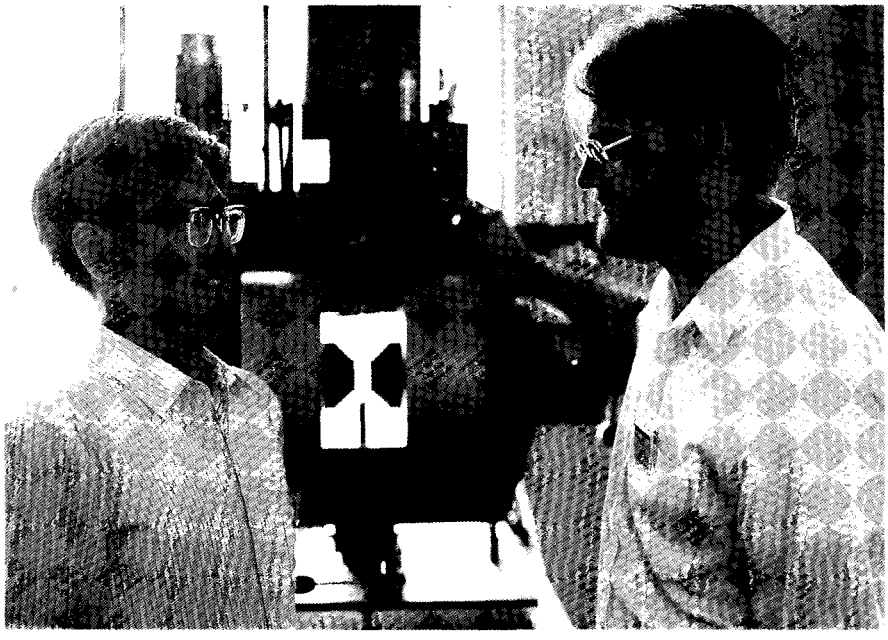
MY OWN SMALL-SCALE EXPERIence of "mobilizing communities to support young children and their families"—I'm on a local playground renovation committee—had me discouraged from the outset (see Washington Diarist, "Safe and Sorry," December 27, 1993). But having been prematurely dyspeptic, I now get to feel truly upbeat instead of merely trying to sound that way. The D.C. Department of Recreation actually came through with its promised contribution to the project, and we raised our matching funds. As for my skepticism about the tame new equipment, designed according to killjoy safety standards, I have a new attitude now that it's actually on order. The play structures are undoubtedly going to strike kids as a little ho-hum, certainly compared with the old collection of thrilling hazards. But one new piece is sure to be a total hit, and we have progressive playground planners to thank: the handicapped-accessible swing, which looks like a primitive flying machine. Though no disabled child may ever use it, it's inconceivable that anybody else will leave it alone.

THE GENTLER SPIRIT OF THE ANImal defenders has definitely left a mark on the culture of children themselves. When Pete Seeger recently performed at my son's school, word came back that some songs weren't quite the way they sounded on the old tapes (and even records) we have at home. In "She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain," I was told, one line never got sung: "Oh, we'll kill the old red rooster, Hack, Hack." By now we baby boomers are adept at cleaning up and recycling our childhood culture, vetting for any benighted matter. It gives nostalgia an edge, which it can always use, as I was reminded when I read about the "Sesame Street" swoon to which Generation X seems to have succumbed. The paraphernalia of their childhood comes pre-politically corrected, no detachment required in the revival of it. They're clamoring for Cookie Monster jackets, sipping from Kermit the Frog mugs, sharing views about the Muppets on the Internet, etc. And as the president of the Children's Television Workshop told *The New York Times*, they're still glued to the show: "In your basic sorority house or fraternity house, as often as not the television is tuned to 'Sesame Street.'" So much for the cognitive value of early childhood stimulation.

ANN HULBERT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Making Science Together



HIVIPS aims to promote cooperation and scientific development by bringing together scientists from different backgrounds and countries.

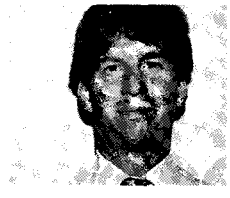
Providing Joint Research Opportunities in Japan

As an electronics engineer, Dr. Gregory Uvieghara has long been intrigued by Japan's success in his chosen field. Small wonder that when the opportunity arose, he jumped at a chance to work as a guest researcher at Hitachi's Central Research Laboratory (CRL) near Tokyo. "The invitation opened the door of a major Japanese laboratory to me. It gave me a unique chance to observe Japanese research methods first-hand," the AT&T Bell Labs researcher says. He spent over a year in Japan studying a new type of semiconductor device.

Opening doors is what the Hitachi Research Visit Programs (HIVIPS) are all about. The programs bring scientists from all over the world together to work on key problems in basic and applied research; allowing creative collaboration that would not be possible otherwise. More than 200 scientists from all over the world have participated in the programs since their inception in 1985.

For Felicia Heiler, HIVIPS allowed her to work side-by-side with Japan's leading expert in submicron semiconductor device physics, whom she had met while studying for her master's degree in electrical engineering at Santa Clara University. The collaboration turned out to be very fruitful. "I ended up with a master's thesis and two publications," Heiler says. She now works as a device engineer for Advanced Micro Devices.

For Dr. Thomas Hildebrandt, HIVIPS gave him a chance to work closely with Japanese experts in handwritten character recognition systems."The sharing of ideas and the facilities certainly were conducive to my research," the Lehigh University computer science professor says. "I made a lot more progress than I would have otherwise."



Dr. Thomas Hildebrandt participated in HIVIPS in 1993.

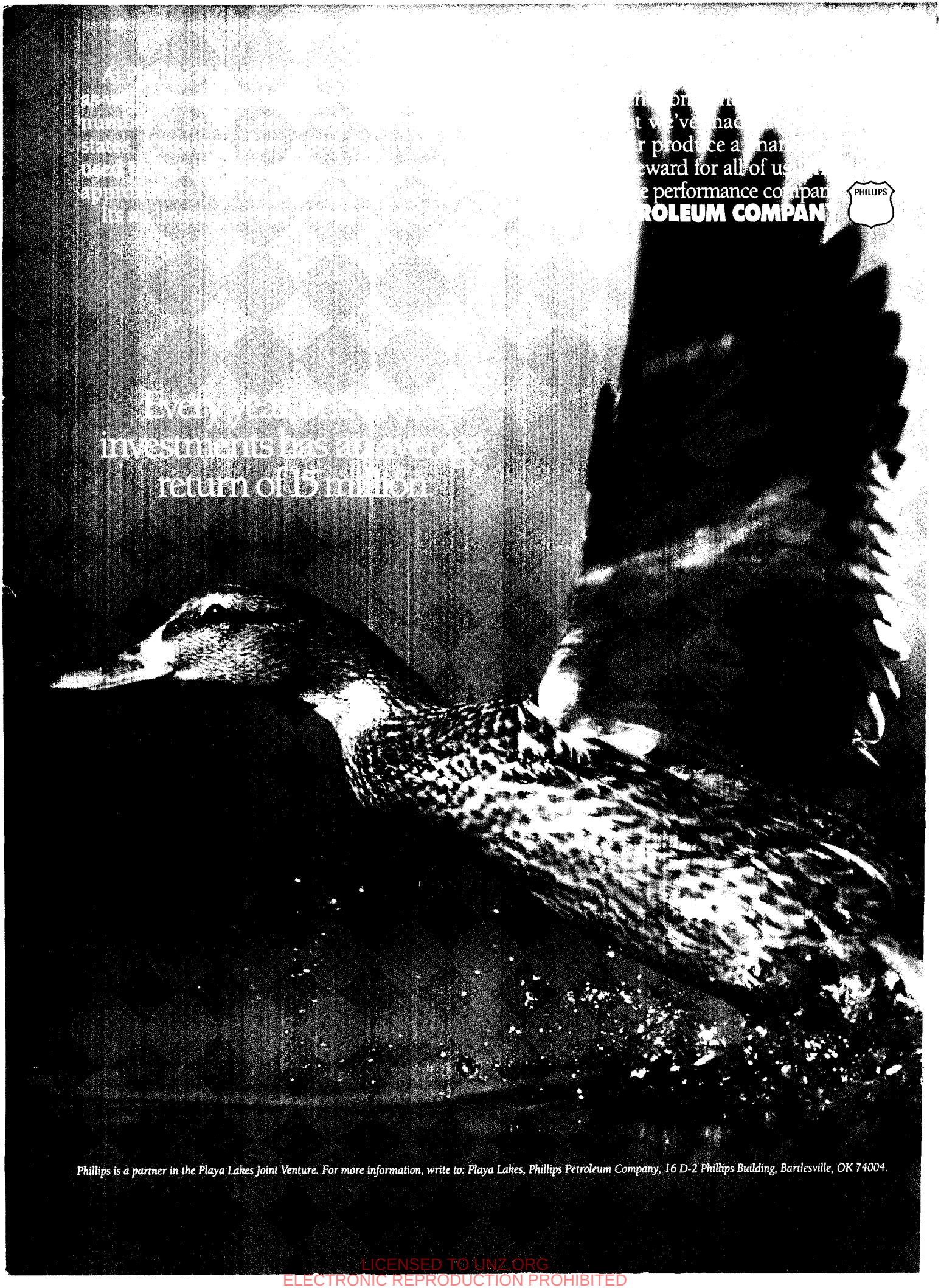
For many participants, lasting friendships may be HIVIPS' most important benefit. "Many of my best friends are people I met at CRL," Heiler says. "In fact, one of them, my Hitachi advisor, came all the way from Japan to attend my wedding."

We at Hitachi are proud to sponsor HIVIPS. We believe that this scientific exchange not only provides research rewards, but also promotes mutual understanding in the scientific community.

HITACHI

© 1994 HITACHI

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Phillips is a partner in the Playa Lakes Joint Venture. For more information, write to: Playa Lakes, Phillips Petroleum Company, 16 D-2 Phillips Building, Bartlesville, OK 74004.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED